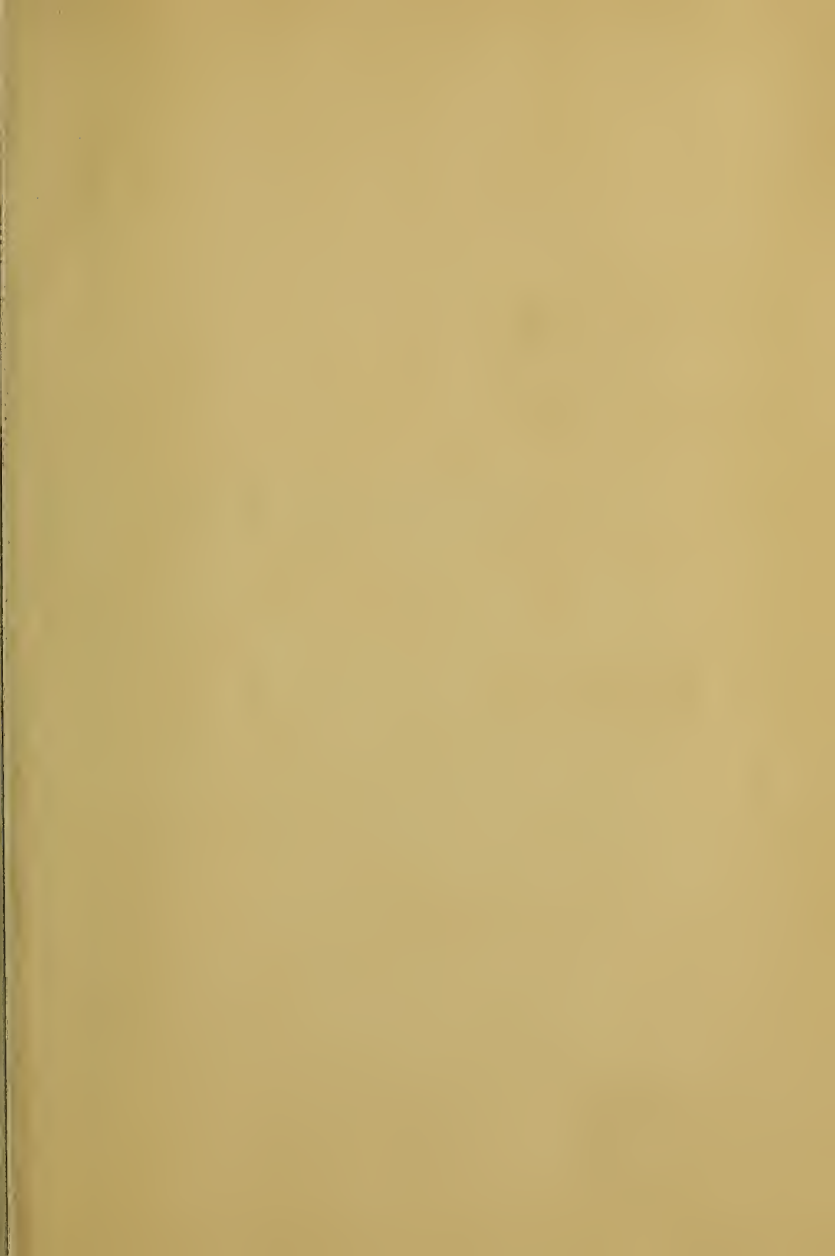






ENGLISH ELEGIES

THE BODLEY HEAD
ANTHOLOGIES

English Epithalamies

By ROBERT CASE

Musa Piscatrix

By JOHN BUCHAN

Florilegium Latinum (Pre-Vic-
torian Poets)

By Rev. F. ST. JOHN THACKERAY
and Rev. E. D. STONE

English Elegies

By J. C. BAILEY

IN PREPARATION

Nineteenth-Century Pastorals

By CHARLES HILL DICK

Florilegium Latinum (Victorian
Poets)

By Rev. F. ST. JOHN THACKERAY
and Rev. E. D. STONE



ENGLISH ELEGIES

Edited by

J. C. Bailey

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JOHN LANE

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I DEDICATE THIS COLLECTION OF
ENGLISH ELEGIES
TO MY FRIEND
FREDERIC GEORGE KENYON
TO WHOSE SUGGESTION IT OWES
ITS ORIGIN

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INTRODUCTION

It is not easy to say quite exactly what an elegy is. The word, like all such words, like epic, lyric, dramatic, like poetry itself, comes to us from the Greeks. Its traditional derivation connects it with the natural utterance of grief, and whatever its origin may have been, the proper meaning of the word ἔλεγος was certainly a lament. The kindred word, ἔλεγείον, on the other hand, had no reference to subject, and merely meant a poem in a particular metre, which had been frequently used for elegies. And even ἔλεγος itself is occasionally used in this metrical sense, irrespective of subject. The conception of an elegy was, in fact, left somewhat undefined by the Greeks: and so it still remains. The task of distinguishing between the different kinds of poetry is, indeed, only less difficult than that of finding a definition of the nature of poetry itself. We all have some sort of vague idea of what we mean by an elegy, as of what we understand by the word poetry, but when we set ourselves to convert the vague idea into a clear and definite one we are likely to find that we have faced a difficult task. And I do not know of much help to be obtained in this case from the recognised critical authorities. Coleridge has, indeed, attempted a definition. "Elegy," he says, "is the form of poetry natural to the reflective mind. It

may treat of any subject, but it must treat of no subject for itself, but always and exclusively with reference to the poet himself." But, though this is certainly stamped with the mark of Coleridge's subtle critical insight, I do not think it can be accepted as a quite satisfactory or final definition. The true elegy is unquestionably the product of the reflective mood, it is essentially "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," and if we divide the productions of the poetic activity into the two great classes of lyric and dramatic, or, if you will, subjective and objective work, there can be no doubt whatever that elegy belongs to the subjective or lyrical faculty, and stands in marked contrast to the drama in particular, and to all poetry in which the poet's aim and hope is to be as little as possible himself, as much as possible the man or thing of which he writes. It is, we all feel it, the cry of the broken heart, the musing of the solitary wanderer, the utterance now of quiet melancholy, now of passionate grief, but always and everywhere of the poet's own feelings. It comes from the heart and should go to the heart.

So far what Coleridge says is no doubt as true as it is suggestive. But his words seem to go a good deal further. Is it really the case that all poems which grow out of reflection, and more particularly, self-reflection, are necessarily elegiac? Are we always unhappy when thinking, and especially when thinking of ourselves? A thousand songs of joy are the sufficient proof of the contrary. Or, if Coleridge did not mean this, but meant to include all poems born of our thoughts about ourselves under the class of elegies, he is, it will be admitted,

still wider of the mark. There is no vainer occupation than that of trying to force arbitrary meanings upon words of old-established use. No cunning of definition, no subtlety of language, no freaks of nomenclature, such as that in which Drayton indulges when he calls his epistles to Sandys and Reynolds "Elegies," will ever make the elegy anything but what Johnson's dictionary calls it, "a mournful song." That, at least, an elegy most undoubtedly is. Mournful, in one way or another, it must be, though those ways may lie as far apart as Wordsworth's quiet resignation and Shelley's passionate despair. Love, Grief, and Death are its three notes:—sometimes only one of them is struck; but, when it is at its richest and sweetest, it is founded on a chord composed of all three. We are sure of our ground so far, and the only question is whether we can get a more precise definition.

I do not know that we shall find any regular definition better than this of Coleridge. I have met with two which aim, even more than his, at formal and philosophical exactness, one of which regards elegy as "that form of poetry in which anything is described as at once desirable and not present," while the other makes the motive of elegy "an ideal either lost or not yet attained, or simply imagined." Both of these are useful and suggestive, but they have each, especially the first, a tendency to limit elegy to a greater extent than Coleridge has done, or than is done in the common acceptance of the word. This is the ordinary penalty of attempts at too great logical exactness, and we shall not perhaps do amiss in turning from them to the less

careful remarks of Shenstone, who, without being a very profound person, discusses the subject sensibly enough in the preface to his own Elegies. "Elegy," he says, "in its true and genuine acceptation includes a tender and querulous idea, and so long as this is sustained it admits of a variety of subjects"; or, as he afterwards explains, "any kind of subject treated so as to diffuse a pleasing melancholy." And he has more in the same strain. His language is the language of the eighteenth century and not what we should use to-day, but he gives the plain common-sense account of the matter, and tells us as well as anyone what an elegy is, as distinct from how it comes to be what it is. With the help of this and the other definitions we may make out for ourselves a fairly good working idea of what the essence and spirit of elegiac poetry is, though by no means such an exact definition as would enable us to say, at a glance, whether a poem is, or is not, an elegy.

The subjects elegies may deal with are, says Shenstone, almost unlimited. They have, however, as a matter of historical fact, dealt principally with two classes of subject. These are the elegies of unrequited or unhappy love, and the elegies, generally, though not always, more sincere, which lament the loss of friends, which grieve over the wounds, not of love, but of death. And we English have in our rich and glorious literature noble specimens of both kinds; though we possess no lament of wounded love which can be spoken of in the same breath with the elegiac outburst produced by the death of Sidney, or with "Lycidas," or "Adonais," or Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis," or the "In Memoriam"

of Tennyson, a succession of noble laments over the noble dead, which, I suppose, no other literature can rival. The Romans, on the other hand, were richer in love elegies than in death songs, and though there are fine laments over death by Horace and Catullus, one is inclined, in spite of these, and in spite of the great elegy of Propertius on Cornelia, to say that Virgil alone of Roman poets had depth and tenderness enough to write a great elegy, and he has only placed some splendid elegiac passages in his great epic, which is not the same thing.

The legitimate range of the elegy is, however, not confined to the subjects of Love and Death. It includes all expressions of what may be one of the highest and most spiritual moods of the human soul. There is no form of sorrow, from the gentle meditative melancholy of Gray to the passionate outburst of some ardent Elizabethan spirit, of which it is not the natural expression. Indeed, the most famous elegiacs ever written are not those of an unhappy lover or a bereaved friend, but of an exile crying for his home. Elegy begins, one may suppose, with what have always been its two special subjects, Love and Death; and then it is an easy step from the longing for the absent mistress to the longing for the distant home; and from that it is not a great advance to the scientific definition I have quoted, which calls all poems elegies which describe any particular object as at once desirable and not present.

I have thought it well to point out the wide field over which elegy may fairly claim to range. But it

is obviously quite impossible to cover the whole in a selection like the present. I have, therefore, confined myself to the single subject of death and the dead, the most frequent and obvious of all subjects of elegy, and that in which it has achieved its most splendid triumph. So much is this the case, indeed, that there is always a tendency, not supported by the best authorities, to restrict the use of the word altogether to laments for the dead. And certainly death, though not the only, is, at least, the most peculiar and undoubted province of elegy. Nor is there any doubt about its affording ample material for a selection of this kind. My difficulty throughout has been not where to find matter for insertion, but how to find room for it. We English have time out of mind been a grave people, apt more than others to meditate on the transitoriness of human things, and in the midst of life to let our thoughts move in the direction of death. And our poets, from Anglo-Saxon times to our own, have in this matter been no ill representatives of the national character. It has, therefore, seemed wiser to keep to this limited field of subject, of which it was possible, without exceeding the limits of this Series, to present a really representative collection, rather than to attempt the wider field, which could not have been adequately covered.

As to subject, then, the position is clear. However properly the name *Elegy* is applied to poems dealing with a variety of subjects, the pieces included in this volume will be found to deal only with one. But as to form? Are we to be confined, as the ancients came to be, to poems in a particular metre? Are there any

rules, as to language or metre, to which an elegy must conform, if it is to deserve the name?

"The proper language of elegy," said Lord Chesterfield, "is the unaffected plaintive language of the passions": and Shenstone says that its style should be "simple, diffuse, and flowing as a mourner's veil." If this is so, and no one will doubt it, it is obvious that some metres will be more suitable to elegy than others. — I have felt it impossible not to include a few Sonnets in this selection, because I felt them to be elegiac in the truest sense, touched with the sadness of death and the mystery of fate in the real elegiac way, but I have never ceased to be conscious of the unfitness of the Sonnet with its too evident architecture, its too conscious art, to be the expression of the simple plaintive tenderness which is the most frequent and the most distinctive note of elegy. It is, no doubt, very dangerous to dogmatise about these questions of the relation of form to subject. The critic has no sooner pronounced that a particular subject cannot be treated in this or that metre, than a poet arrives to perform the impossible feat with success as triumphant as that with which Gainsborough's Blue Boy refuted Sir Joshua. This much it is, however, perhaps safe to say as to the proper form of elegy. The more passionate the grief is, the less obvious should be the metrical system. The heroic couplet, for instance, the structure of which is so evident and undisguised, that it is not merely felt, but understood, at once, must be generally quite unsuitable for any kind of elegy, and especially for the more passionate sort. Its aptness for epigram,

its besetting sins of wit and rhetoric, are all against it, alien as they are to the elegiac atmosphere. "A fitter metre for the utterance of strong feeling is such a stanza as Matthew Arnold has employed in Thyrsis, the Spenserian stanza which Shelley chose for Adonais, or the irregular metre of Lycidas. In all these cases we hear the music, indeed, from the first, but it may well be that it is long before we could give any account of its system. It addresses itself to the ear, not to the mind: the artist seems absorbed in his grief, not conscious of his art, not thinking of rules of versification, but falling inevitably and unawares into a strain which is at once a melodious and a natural utterance of his sorrow. For the quieter, more meditative elegy, on the other hand, a structure somewhat more obvious seems the best. Gray, who had made a special study of metre, and was, besides, the best of judges in such a matter, chose the simple four-lined stanza, with alternate rhymes, for his Elegy, and everybody feels that the perfect simplicity of the metre is one of the things that gave the poem its undying charm and make it stand alone as, in popular estimation, "the Elegy," unrivalled and unique.

We may gather indications, in this way, from theory and from practice, as to the formal conditions to be preferred in elegy. But whatever differences in fitness there may be between this metre and that, we shall not in modern days think of making the mistake made by the ancients, who showed a tendency to confine the elegy to one form of metre. The divisions of poetry rest not on the form but on the spirit. It is the lyric inspiration, the dramatic

vision, which decide to which of the two great divisions a poem belongs. Beauty of form may be everything, often is and must be everything in deciding the success or failure of a poem, but it is by its mood and subject that we settle in what class that success or failure is to be registered. And so in elegy. To quote Gray again, "Nature and sorrow and tenderness are the true genius of such things," and when they are present, in whatever shape and under whatever name, we unhesitatingly recognise the true elegy. Spenser or Tennyson may make out of them a large and elaborate poem; Herrick a few incomparable stanzas drenched with emotion; Milton and Browne a pastoral; Milton and Gray a sonnet; Tennyson, again, and Dryden, an ode; but while the special name or form adopted may weigh against the poem's elegiac claim, it must never be considered as important enough to bar it absolutely. Tennyson's poem on Wellington is an ode; but a definition of elegy which excluded it would be ridiculous. Gray might very well have called his greatest poem by another name; but that would not have made it any the less the supreme and typical meditative elegy. The poet must be left to choose his own form of expression, and, whatever it may be, we must not refuse to hear him, though much of his success may depend on the wisdom of his choice.

After saying thus much about the elegy in general, it is time to turn to it as it has appeared in English Literature, and especially to that particular form of it represented in this volume. The elegiac mood has,

as I said, always been a favourite one in England, and we are not surprised to find elegy making very early appearance in our poetry. To say nothing of four remarkable Anglo-Saxon elegies, of which Mr Stopford Brooke gives an interesting account in his "*Early English Literature*," we find that when English poetry, as we know it, begins to make its appearance in the fourteenth century, elegy at once claims the important place it has ever since occupied. "The cradle song of modern English Poetry was a Lament; its *Vita Nuova* an *In Memoriam*;" says Mr Gollanz, in his edition of the beautiful fourteenth century poem called "*Pearl*." It is a touching expression of a father's grief for his dead daughter, combining in remarkable fashion the gravity which appears to be so conspicuous in Anglo-Saxon poetry with something of that rich sense of the beauty and interest of the world which could not come to perfection for another two hundred years. It consists of a hundred and one verses or stanzas of twelve lines each, and takes the form of a vision in which the poet sees the "pearl of great price," his infant daughter whom he had lost, and, after a long conversation in which she instructs him in the divine wisdom, as Beatrice instructs Dante, is at length admitted to a view of the New Jerusalem, to arrive at which he is eager at once to cross the separating stream, but is awakened in his attempt, and finds himself again on earth.

Even earlier than this is an *Elegy on Edward I.*, reprinted in "*Percy's Relics*," the forerunner of a long series of poetic laments over dead kings and princes. This poem is not, however, in itself, of any special importance,

and, fine as "Pearl" is, it is too long, and written in a language too little resembling the English of to-day, to permit of its inclusion in a selection of this kind. The English language, as we know it, makes its appearance, of course, with Chaucer; and here again it is noticeable that the first ambitious effort of our first great poet was an Elegy. "The Boke of the Duchesse" was a compliment paid by Chaucer to his patron, John of Gaunt, on the death of his first Duchess, Blanche, who died in 1369. It has been underrated, perhaps, for it already has charming passages, full of Chaucer's bright and human pleasure in birds and flowers. But its merits are hardly those of the elegy, and it is, of course, far too long for insertion in a selection. It is in the form of a dream, so common in the Middle Ages. The poet goes hunting and comes upon a man in black, sitting under an oak, who first makes great lamentations:

"No man may my sorwe glade,
That maketh my hewe to falle and fade;
And hath myn understanding lorn,
That me is wo that I was born.
May noght make my sorwes slyde,
Nought the remedies of Ovyde;
Ne Orpheus, god of melodye,
Ne Dedalus, with playes slye;
Ne hele me may phisicien,
Noght Ypocras, ne Galien:
Me is wo that I live houres twelve."

Then he sings the praises of his white lady (Blanche) and finally in the last lines tells the poet that she is dead, and that that is the cause of his sorrow.

The poets have, as a rule, in spite of all slanders, been loyal to each other, and especially to the princes of their order. The death of Chaucer did not produce any regular elegy, but it is the theme of several touching elegiac passages in the poems of his admiring successors. Occleve, in the Proem to his "De Regimine Principum," breaks into a noble utterance of his love and sorrow :

*"But weleaway ! so is myne herte wo
That the honour of Englisshe tonge is dede
Of whiche I was wonte have counseile and rede.*

*"O maister dere and fader reverent,
My maister Chaucer, floure of eloquence,
Mirrour of fructuous entendement,
O universal fader in science,
Allas ! that thou thyne excellent prudence
In thy bedde mortalle myghtest not bequethe,
What eyled dethe, alas ! why wold he sle the ?*

*"O Dethe ! thou didest not harme singulere
In slaughtre of hym, but alle this londe it smertethe ;
But natheles yit hast thow no powere
His name to slee, his hye vertu astertethe
Unslayne fro the whiche ay us lystly hertethe,
With bokes of his ornat endityng,
That is to alle this lande enlumynyng."*

Few poets have been honoured with a more beautiful lament. And there is another passage, of similar tone, in the body of the poem. John Lydgate, too, the Monk of Bury St Edmunds, pays his tribute of praise and sorrow, in the Prologues to his "Story of Thebes," and "Fall of Princes," and in his "Praise of the Virgin Mary."

Of other elegiac poetry in the interval between Chaucer and Surrey the most remarkable is the "*Lament for the Makaris*"* of William Dunbar, which I have inserted for the sake of the interest of its subject, and for the grave beauty and pathos which will not escape even those who most feel the quaintness and difficulty of his language. John Skelton, too, who was Henry VIII.'s tutor, has left us some elegies, though the real bent of his poetic gift was rather toward satire. There is one on Edward IV., and another which is maturer and finer, on the fourth Earl of Northumberland, who was killed in a riot in 1489. It is of considerable length; but a few verses may be quoted here:

"If the hole quere of the Musis nyne
 In me all onely wer sett and comprysed,
 Enbrethed with the blast of influence devyne,
 As perfytlly as could be thought or devised;
 To me also allthough it were promised
 Of laureat Phebus holy the eloquence,
 All were to lytell for his magnificence."

.

It finishes with a beautiful prayer:

"O perlese Prince of heven emperyall,
 That with one word formed al thing of noughte;
 Heaven, hell, and erth obey unto thy call;
 Which to thy resemblaunce wondersly hast wrought
 All mankynd, whom thou full dere hast bought,
 With thy bloud precious our finaunce thou did pay,
 And us redemed from the fendys pray:

* Poets.

“ *To the pray we, as Prince incomparable
 As thou art of mercy and pyte the well,
 Thou bring unto thy joy eterminable
 The soull of this lorde from all daunger of hell,
 In endles blis with the to byde and dwell
 In thy palace above the orient,
 Where thou art Lord and God omnipotent.*

“ *O quene of mercy, O lady full of grace,
 Mayden moste pur, and Goddes moder dere,
 To sorowful hartes cheif comfort and solace,
 Of all women O flowre withouten pere,
 Pray to thy Son above the sterris clere,
 He to vouchesaf, by thy mediacion
 To pardon thy servaunt, and brynge to salvacion.*

“ *In joy triumphaunt the heavenly yerarchy,
 With all the hole sorte of that glorious place,
 His soule mot receyve into theyr company
 Thorow bounty of Hym that formed all solace :
 Wel of pite, of mercy, and of grace
 The Father, the Sonn, and the Holy Ghost
 In Trinitate one God of myghtes moste.”*

Besides these, there is the curious “*Boke of Philipp Sparowe,*” written in the first years of the sixteenth century, on the death of a sparrow, belonging to Jane Scroupe, who was being educated in Carrow Nunnery near Norwich. There is, of course, an imitation of Catullus, but there is much besides. The poem is some 1300 lines long, and I can only give a short passage here. Jane Scroupe is speaking :

“ *Was never bird in cage
 More gentle of courage*

*In doing his homage
Unto his sovereign.
Alas, I say again
Death hath departed us twain
The false cat hath thee slain.
Farewell! Philipp, adieu!
Our Lord thy soul rescue.
Farewell without restore,
Farewell for evermore."*

The poem naturally wants the seriousness of elegy, which only the melancholy of a highly civilised age enabled Catullus and Matthew Arnold to give to the death of an animal, and even if the matter were more serious, this ambling metre would prevent it from making any adequate impression. Skelton has a touch of Rabelais or Marot about him, and it is not from such men that we look for elegy. The grave beauty of the lament for Lord Northumberland belongs, it should be noted, to his early life, and does not reappear.

In passing from the tutor of Henry VIII.'s childhood to the poet who was one of the ornaments and one of the victims of the close of his reign, we definitely pass from the atmosphere of the Middle Ages to that of the Renaissance. Skelton has a little of each about him. The satirist of clerical abuses, and the scholar, whom Erasmus could call "*Britannicarum literarum lumen et decus*," belong to the new order of things. The total want of order and method, and of any conception of the architecture of literary work, the habit of thinking that anything that occurs to him is worth saying, and that any place in any poem will suit it very well, all this, on

the other hand, points back to the incoherence of the Middle Age. When we open Surrey, we feel at once that we have passed out of barbarism. There is something adult and almost modern in the new propriety of language, in the comparative reasonableness of the outlook upon life and the world.

The hundred years which elapsed between Surrey's death and that of Charles I. form the most brilliant century in our literary history, and elegy, with which we are concerned here, fills its full place in it. Naturally Spenser, who is so much the greatest poetic figure of the period, if we leave the drama out of account, occupies the first place also in elegy. "Astrophel," "Daphnida," "The Ruins of Time," constitute an imposing mass of elegiac work which has few parallels. Two of them relate to the death, which called forth more and finer poetic lamentation than that of any Englishman before or since, for the "Ruins of Time" is, in fact, an additional elegy on Sidney, occasioned, perhaps, by the consciousness in Spenser himself, or in others, of the inadequacy of "Astrophel" to express a love and sorrow so great when felt by so great a poet. Among other poets who joined Spenser in attempting to express the universal grief at what then seemed, and perhaps was the most tragic event of Elizabeth's reign, were Fulke Greville, afterwards Lord Brooke, Henry Constable, Thomas Watson, and Sir Walter Raleigh. Two of these elegies, with others, were published in the collection of which Spenser's "Astrophel" was the principal poem. One may observe in nearly all these pieces, that elegy in poets of the Renaissance no longer strikes quite the same note as was

struck by the medieval elegy. The old feeling aroused by death was, as it were, that of helplessness before the inevitable; death is only one more dark incident, the final one, in a dark and difficult world. But these brave Renaissance spirits, who walked life's journey so erect and joyous and defiant, intent on seeing, knowing, enjoying, daring, everything that life might put in their way to see or know or dare or enjoy, could not content themselves, when they saw a life of noble promise cut short in its prime, with the reflection that death was universal and inevitable. They were impatient and indignant at the apparent loss and waste that death involves. If what the men of the Middle Ages felt about death amounted to little more than a cold consciousness that it is the common lot, if our feeling about it to-day is principally one of wonder at its mystery, it is neither its mystery nor its universality that chiefly filled the minds of the men of the Renaissance; what struck them above all things was its cruelty. That is the note we catch again and again in their elegies, and not least in those that followed Sidney's death.

A generation later, when the stars in our poetic constellation had become more numerous, another death occurred, about which there was much of the same feeling of bright hopes disappointed, and which produced a still greater body of elegiac poetry. But few arts are rarer than that of making the poetic plant flourish in courtly soil, and though Chapman, Donne, Drummond, Wither, William Browne, and Thomas Campion were among the many poets who expressed the grief they sincerely felt for the young Prince of Wales, who had

shown himself a true patron of letters, their efforts produced nothing that can be described as great or important poetry.

Chapman's poem, which contains more than six hundred lines, and is almost a maze of confusion and obscurity, has some fine passages here and there. In one he laments that

*"One that in hope took up to topless height
All his great ancestors: his one sail, freight
With all, all Princes' treasures"*

should die so young that he can have accomplished

*" . . . nothing solid, worthy of our souls!
Nothing that reason more than sense extols!
Nothing that may in perfect judgment be
A fit foot for our crown eternity."*

On this occasion Henry Peacham published a book of his poems, containing a series of laments for the Prince, and, indeed, the custom of publishing a number of elegies, by one or many authors, of which Spenser's "*Astrophel*" was the first example, had now grown not uncommon.

The death of Ben Jonson in 1637, which was, perhaps, regarded as a greater loss by men of letters than that of any other English poet has ever been, was at once followed by the publication of the volume called "*Jonsonus Virbius*," which consists of tributes to his memory contributed by authors, among whom are to be found the names of Falkland, who opens it with a graceful pastoral elegy, Cleveland, whose charming little poem will be

found in this selection, Waller, Ford, Cartwright, and Sir John Beaumont. In the same spirit, though with inevitably inferior effect, more than fifty of Cartwright's friends, amongst whom were Henry Vaughan, and Henry Laves the composer, prefixed verses to the edition of his plays and poems printed in 1651. Milton's "Lycidas" is, again, in the original edition of 1638, the last of thirteen pieces which were together entitled "Obsequies to the memory of Mr Edward King." They were accompanied by a collection of Greek and Latin verses by twenty-three authors. Latin, indeed, was often employed for elegiac purposes; and, to give only one instance, the friend whose loss Milton felt most deeply is not the one commemorated in the English "Lycidas," but the one whom he lamented in his beautiful Latin pastoral, "Epitaphium Damonis." Even a hundred years later, Gray lamented West in Latin hexameter, as well as in the well-known sonnet, and the Latin poem strikes a higher note than the English. Throughout this period, from the publication of "Astrophel" to that of "Lycidas," there had been a steady growth in the fashion of writing verses to the memory of the dead. The greater and lesser men are alike in following it; and the result is naturally an immense quantity of artificial and mediocre elegy. Not much is worth a second reading; but among those who deserve to be remembered are William Browne, who succeeds by his charming, almost childish, simplicity; Sir John Beaumont, whose elegies are an important part of his poetic achievement, and are marked, like all he did, by a certain quiet distinction, not so much of mind as of tone and taste; Donne, whose interest, on the

other hand, is spiritual, and above all things intellectual ; and Jonson, whose feeling is sincere, and often beautifully uttered, though not always easily perceived behind his more obvious qualities of learning, critical acuteness, and manly understanding. All these are represented in this book. Samuel Daniel's elegy on his patron, the Earl of Devonshire, which some readers may perhaps expect to find here, has seemed to me, in spite of its evident sincerity, of too pedestrian a style and conception to justify the insertion of a poem of such length.

Elegy, indeed, more than once during this period, was treated on a scale entirely forbidding reproduction in a selection like the present. Like Chaucer in his "*Boke of the Duchesse*," like Skelton in "*Philipp Sparowe*," such men as Spenser, Donne, and Ben Jonson set themselves, but with infinitely greater seriousness, to build large and ambitious poems on the superstructure of an individual death. Sidney's death gives Spenser occasion to introduce the ruined city of *Verulam* moralising on the vanity of human things ; Jonson builds up a great poem, in ten parts, on the death of that Lady Digby, whom Habington also celebrated in one of his more pleasing elegies ; and Donne chose to give his splendid creation, the "*Anatomy of the World*," the form of an annual lament for a child whom he had never seen. "*Mrs Elizabeth Drury*," who was Bacon's niece, and is said to have been the intended bride of Prince Henry, died in 1610, when she was only fifteen. Next year the "*Funeral Elegy*," given in this selection, and the "*First Anniversary*," were published, and in 1612 the "*Second Anniversary*" followed. The whole was entitled "*An Anatomy of*

the World ; wherein, by occasion of the untimely death of Mistress Elizabeth Drury, the frailty and decay of this whole world is represented." The "Second Anniversary" has also the title "*Of the Progress of the Soul ; wherein by occasion of the religious death of Mistress Elizabeth Drury, the incommodities of the soul in this life, and her exaltation in the next, are contemplated*"; and Donne has filled it full of power of every kind, so that it rises above its original relation to Elizabeth Drury, and becomes the vehicle of the poet's grandest thought about life and death and the body. For a parallel to it we must wait till Tennyson's "*In Memoriam*," or Browning's "*La Saisiaz*."

Of these three great poems, I regret particularly that considerations of space have prevented the insertion of Spenser's "*Ruins of Time*," which contains some beautiful stanzas consecrated to Sidney's memory. A few only can be given here :

"O noble spirite ! live there ever blessed,
The world's late wonder, and the heaven's new joy ;
Live ever there, and leave me here distressed
With mortall cares and cumbrous worlds anoy !
But, where thou dost that happines enjoy,
Bid me, O ! bid me quicklie come to thee,
That happie there I maie thee alwaies see.

"Yet, whilst the fates affoord me vitall breath,
I will it spend in speaking of thy praise,
And sing to thee, untill that timelie death
By heavens doome doo ende my earthlie daies :
Thereto doo thou my humble spirite raise,
And into me that sacred breath inspire
Which thou there breathest perfect and entire.

*“ Then will I sing: but who can better sing
 Than thine owne sister, peerles Ladie bright,
 Which to thee sings with deep harts sorrowing,
 Sorrowing temperèd with deare delight,
 That her to heare I feeble my feeble spright
 Robbèd of sense, and ravishèd with joy:
 O sad joy, made of mourning and anoy!*

*“ Yet will I sing; but who can better sing
 Than thou thy selfe, thine owne selves valiance,
 That, whilst thou livedst, madest the forrests ring,
 And fields resownd, and flockes to leap and daunce,
 And shepheards leave their lambs unto mischaunce,
 To runne thy shrill Arcadian Pipe to heare:
 O, happie were those dayes, thrice happie were!*

*“ But now, more happie thou, and wretched wee
 Which want the wonted sweetnes of thy voice,
 Whiles thou, now in Elisian fields so free,
 With Orpheus, and with Linus, and the choice
 Of all that ever did in rimes rejoyce,
 Conversest and doost heare their heavenlie layes,
 And they heare thine, and thine doo better praise.*

*“ So there thou livest, singing evermore,
 And here thou livest, being ever song
 Of us, which living lovèd thee afore,
 And now thee worship mongst that blessed throng
 Of heavenlie Poets and Heroës strong.
 So thou both here and there immortall art,
 And everie where through excellent desart.”*

One cannot but be struck with the way in which Spenser, most delicately, exquisitely gifted of Englishmen, fills the elegy full of his ineffable charm and tenderness. Donne, on the other hand, almost buries the note of lament in his curious and subtle thinking, as

he so often buries his power of thought under a tangled overgrowth of conceits. It is difficult by quotation to give any idea of the "Anatomy"; but besides the "Funeral Elegy," which has been inserted in the selection, a few passages may be given here which will afford some slight indication of Donne's method of treating his subject. Here is the opening of the "First Anniversary":

*"When that rich soul which to her heaven is gone,
Whom all do celebrate, who know they've one
—For who is sure he hath a soul, unless
It see, and judge, and follow worthiness,
And by deeds praise it? he who doth not this,
May lodge an innate soul, but 'tis not his—";*

or take this passage from the "Second Anniversary":

*"Think, then, my soul, that death is but a groom,
Which brings a taper to the outward room,
Whence thou spiest first a little glimmering light,
And after brings it nearer to thy sight";*

.

or this:

*"She, she embraced a sickness, gave it meat,
The purest blood, and breath, that e'er it eat;
And hath taught us, that though a good man hath
Title to heaven, and plead it by his faith,
And though he may pretend a conquest, since
Heaven was content to suffer violence,
Yea though he plead a long possession too
—For they're in heaven on earth who heaven's works do—
Though he had right and power and place, before,
Yet death must usher, and unlock the door."*

There is no need to speak of Jonson's "Eupheme," for the largest and most striking of those of its ten parts which survive, has been included in the selection. It will be found full of fine religious feeling, nobly and characteristically uttered. Another instance of elegy on a large scale, though not so large as these, is afforded by Francis Quarles' "Alphabet of Elegies" on Archdeacon Ailmer, who died in 1625. The title of the volume is "An Alphabet of Elegies, Upon the much and truly lamented death of that famous for Learning, Piety, and true Friendship, Doctor Ailmer, a great favourer, and fast friend to the Muses, and late Archdeacon of London, Imprinted in his Heart, that ever loves his Memory — written by Fra. Quarles. Cum Privelegio {^{Am}/_{Dol}}oris. Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori." It consists of twenty-two "elegies," each consisting of six rhymed couplets. Quarles is, of course, not a poet of the order of Spenser or Jonson or Donne; but there is feeling and some force of expression in the "Alphabet." Here are two of the Elegies, No. 10, and No. 13 :

*Knowledge (the depth of whose unbounded main
Hath been the wreck of many a curious braine
And from her (yet unreconcil'd) schooles
Hath fill'd us with so many learned fooles)
Hath tutor'd thee with rules that cannot erre,
And taught thee how to know thy selfe, and her;
Furnisht thy nimble soule in height of measure,
With humane riches and divinest treasure,
From whence, as from a sacred spring, did flow
Fresh Oracles, to let the hearer know*

*A way to glory: and to let him see,
The way to glory, is to study thee.*

.

*“No, no, he is not dead: The mouth of fame,
Honors shrill Herald, would preserve his name,
And make it live in spite of death and dust,
Were there no other heaven, no other trust.
He is not dead: the sacred Nine deny,
The soule that merits Fame, should ever die:
He lives; and when the latest breath of fame
Shall want her Trumpe, to glorifie a name,
He shall survive, and these selfe-closed eyes,
That now lie slumbring in the dust, shall rise,
And fill'd with endlesse glory, shall enjoy
The perfect vision of eternall joy.”*

This period closes, as I said, with Milton's "Lycidas." There grief is still passionate in utterance, whatever it may have been in feeling; still passionate, out-speaking, deep-feeling, as the men of the Renaissance and the early seventeenth century were; as Herrick still shows himself in a hundred little pieces, not professed elegies, but fuller, some of them, of elegiac sentiment than many poems which enjoy the name; but with Herrick and Milton the old world goes, politeness takes the place of passion, and elegy is hardly recognisable in its critical, panegyric, complimentary dress, as seen in Marvell's and Dryden's poems on Cromwell, or in the great ode on "Mrs Anne Killigrew." It is not in the main poetic current of the age of prose that we must look for its highest utterance of the elegiac sentiment. Great elegies are not easily written with the applause of "the town" in view. But side by side with the dominant taste for wit and epigram,

there existed throughout the eighteenth century a simpler poetry, the tone of which is quiet, tender, meditative. Its principal representatives are, of course, Gray and Collins. Elegy, in their hands, is no longer a passionate utterance of grief; it becomes simply a quiet meditation on mortality. Still, unambitious as this form appears, Gray has known how to discover in it such great possibilities, and to realise them with a perfection so unique, that we all think of him, more than of anyone else, as uttering the universal elegiac sentiment of humanity, and even a critic, so little disposed to overpraise him as Mr Swinburne, is compelled to declare that "as an elegiac poet, he holds for all ages his unassailable and sovereign station."

There is the less need to say much here of elegy as it has appeared in the last two centuries of our literature, as the general lines on which English poetry has moved are well known, and elegy has followed them as much as any other form of verse. The selection may accordingly be left to speak for itself. It is hoped that it will be found fairly representative. With Dryden and Pope to stand for the main stream of poetic activity after the Restoration, with Gray and Collins for that smaller stream which mingled with the other without losing characteristics of its own, Comper for the revival of truth and simplicity, Burns for that of passion, Shelley for that of the higher poetic imagination, Wordsworth for that profound sense of the seriousness of life, always latent in the English character, which he more than anyone gave back to English poetry, I hope it will be felt that nothing important has been omitted. I am happy, too, in being able now to add

some noble specimens of the elegiac work of Tennyson and Matthew Arnold. For, of course, there is no poetic form in which the special gifts both of Tennyson and of Arnold found more complete expression than in that of elegy. The extent of their elegiac work, too, is very considerable. Much of it is, however, still under the restrictions of copyright. It was a special pleasure to me that Messrs Macmillan felt able to relax these so far as to allow me to print "Thyrsis" and "Geist's Grave." For the "Memorial Verses," beautiful as they are, could not by themselves have given any adequate representation of the elegy as Matthew Arnold treated it. And if Arnold also had been poorly represented in the selection, I should have felt an even keener regret than I now do at my inability to obtain permission for the insertion of any copyright poems of Tennyson. For Tennyson and Arnold, I think, each in his own special way, and more than anyone else, represented the peculiar thoughtfulness, descended from Wordsworth perhaps, but no longer the same as his, belonging now half to doubt as well as half to faith, which is a conspicuous characteristic of our own day. I have been so fortunate, however, as to obtain the leave of the greatest of living English poets to insert four of his many noble laments; and I cannot too warmly express my gratitude to him for allowing me so to enrich my selection. I owe also a great debt of gratitude to Mr Robert Bridges for the kindness by which I have been enabled to print three beautiful elegies of his, one of which, in its rich loveliness, recalls the Elizabethans, while nothing could be more modern than the others, with their Whitmanlike

gift of making the actual fact, in its most naked reality, serve the full purpose of poetry. Everyone into whose hands this book may come will be glad that they are here; and everyone, again, will feel with me that no selection of English Elegies could to-day be considered anything but most incomplete which did not include Mr William Watson's noble poem on the death of Tennyson; and will be as grateful to him, as I am, for allowing me to insert it. I am also greatly indebted to Mr Le Gallienne for his generosity in giving me leave to print his fine Elegy on Stevenson: as well as to Mr Watts-Dunton, Mrs Meynell, and the representatives of the Rev. E. C. Lefroy, all of whom have enriched the selection by their kindness.

On the whole, I hope, in spite of omissions which are my misfortune, and some, too, perhaps, which are my fault, that the book may be thought to include an adequate selection from the immense mass of English elegiac poetry. I can only say that I have tried to consider everything that had a claim to be admitted, that, while most of the poems included are included on what I conceive to be their intrinsic merits, some have also been given on account of their representative or historic interest, and that I have greatly regretted the necessary exclusion of many the insertion of which has only been prevented by considerations of space. In any case, I think it will be admitted that the elegies reprinted are remarkable proof that hardly any moment in the life of English poetry has failed to find expression in elegy.

It has not been thought necessary to say anything

of the classes into which elegies have sometimes been divided. The Love Elegy is, indeed, a class by itself, but we have nothing to do with it here, as this selection is confined to elegies dealing with death. It is, no doubt, possible to distinguish different forms among these, such as the large poem involving something like a story, as the "Boke of the Duchesse," the Pastoral elegy which extends from Spenser's "Daphnaida" to Dryden's "Tears of Amyntas," the simple lament which is the one most largely represented in this volume, the literary and critical elegy like Dryden's "Oldham," and the poem of general meditation and reflection tinged with melancholy, like Gray's "Elegy," and minor productions of the same class, like Michael Bruce's "Elegy in Spring." The Comic Elegy and the Satirical Elegy, which have sometimes been added; have no more to do with that form of poetry called Elegy than a comic history has with that form of prose called History.

There is another set of poems represented in this volume, which perhaps deserves to be considered a separate class. It might be said that a man cannot, strictly speaking, write his own elegy, any more than he can pronounce his own funeral oration. But many poets have spoken with touching effect of their own deaths; and I have thought myself entitled to treat such poems as essentially elegies. There is a remarkable series of them: the thoughts of such men as Raleigh, Shakspeare, Drummond, Herrick, Gray, Burns, Landor—and I wish I had been allowed to add Tennyson and Browning—on their own deaths, give us, it seems

to me, a long line of poems of quite unique and truly elegiac interest.

A note should, perhaps, be added on the distinction between the *Elegy* and the *Epitaph*. The words have been so constantly interchanged, and the one form so easily passes into the other, that it would have been easy to justify the inclusion of a good many epitaphs. The proper distinction, however, seems to me to be that an *elegy* is a lament, while an *epitaph* is an inscription. The one is a statement of facts about the dead, the other an expression of the feelings of the living. Of course they easily pass into each other. But the distinction is a real one, and I have endeavoured to observe it; though I have not felt bound to exclude such a piece as Pope's lines on the Digbys, which, although actually inscribed on their monument, seem to me to strike the note of *elegy*; or, again, Cleveland's epitaph on Ben Jonson, which was all that I could find room for of that famous elegiac collection, "*Jonsonus Virbius*." There is something of the same difficulty about the literary or critical *elegy*; but it has not been thought necessary to refrain from including such a piece as Jonson's noble poem on Shakspeare, though it is certainly at least as much a eulogy as a lament. Definitions in a matter so delicate as poetry must not be too rigidly pressed. Jonson was a critic, and he took a critic's way of expressing his sense of loss.

With this, I will leave the selection to speak for itself. Much may, no doubt, be said against the making of more and ever more *Anthologies*. But a genera-

tion which has seen the popularity of Mr Palgrave's "Golden Treasury of Lyrics," and of such volumes as Matthew Arnold's "Selection from Wordsworth," can hardly deny their possibilities of usefulness. It is to be hoped that in a volume like the present, the tracing of a special form of poetry throughout the history of our literature has a value of its own. But, apart from such considerations, there is surely an advantage of a more popular order in volumes of selections. If choice poems, even those that are the work of great men, are to be found only in complete editions of their authors, by the large majority they will never be found at all. There must be many people, who really appreciate poetry, but have neither opportunity nor inclination to study such poets as Donne and Ben Jonson for themselves. There is always much in an old writer that is difficult to the ordinary modern reader; and he is probably unable or unwilling to search out the part which is not. The humblest of Anthologies may play a useful function here. It represents the small, the new, the easy, in contrast with the large, the old, the difficult; and it may be a stepping-stone to something better than itself. How many of us owe our knowledge of some of our favourite poets, whom we should not otherwise have so much as heard of, to a chance poem seen and learnt by heart in the "Golden Treasury," which sent us on to all the rest?

There is only one more word to say. We are all—
all of us, at any rate, who are likely to care for poetry—
certain to have from time to time our elegiac moods.
Sorrow is a visitor at every gate, one day or the next;

and in her presence those of us who really believe in the high influence poetry has, or may have, over us, are inclined to turn to poetry for part, and perhaps for a large part, of the needed consolation. No poetry should be nearer to us at such times than that which was itself written, as elegy has so often been, under the shadow of actual and personal grief. The chief thing which distinguishes poets from other men is not that they — feel differently from the rest of us, but that they can utter what we can only feel. It is natural, then, that we should go to them; and it may well be that by breathing for a while their higher atmosphere, we may learn something of their sources of consolation, and gain for ourselves, too, some portion of that power of mastering the emotions without ceasing to feel them at their fullest, which is for them the necessary condition of their utterance, and for us all, as well as for them, the true secret of life.

J. C. B.

ENGLISH ELEGIES

DAPHNAÏDA

[*An Elegie upon the Death of the noble and vertuous Douglas Howard, daughter and heire of Henry Lord Howard, and wife of Arthur Gorges, Esquire. By Ed. Sp. 1591.*]

What-ever man be he whose heavy mind,
With grief of mournful great mishap oppressed,
Fit matter for his cares increase would find,
Let read the rueful plaint herein expressed,
Of one, (I ween), the woefulst man alive,
Even sad Alcyon, whose empiercèd breast
Sharp sorrow did in thousand pieces rive.

But whoso else in pleasure findeth sense,
Or in this wretched life doth take delight,
Let him be banished far away from hence ;
Ne let the sacred Sisters here be hight,*
Though they of sorrow heavily can sing ;
For even their heavy song would breed delight ;
But here no tunes, save sobs and groans, shall ring.

In stead of them, and their sweet harmony,
Let those three fatal Sisters, whose sad hands
Do weave the direful threads of destiny,
And in their wrath break off the vital bands,
Approach hereto ; and let the dreadful Queen
Of Darkness deep come from the Stygian strands,
And grisly Ghosts, to hear the doleful teene.†

* called.

† sorrow.

In gloomy evening, when the weary Sun,
 After his day's long labour drew to rest,
 And sweaty steeds, now having overrun
 The compassed sky, 'gan water in the west,
 I walked abroad to breathe the freshing air
 In open fields, whose flowering pride, oppressed
 With early frosts, had lost their beauty fair.

There came unto my mind a troublous thought,
 Which daily doth my weaker wit possess,
 Ne* lets it rest until it forth have brought
 Her long borne Infant, fruit of heaviness,
 Which she conceived hath through meditation
 Of this world's vainness and life's wretchedness,
 That yet my soul it deeply doth empassion.

So as I musèd on the misery
 In which men live, and I of many most
 Most miserable man; I did espy
 Where towards me a sorry wight did cost,†
 Clad all in black, that mourning did bewray,
 And Jacob staff in hand devoutly crossed,
 Like to some Pilgrim come from far away.

His careless locks uncombèd and unshorn,
 Hung long adown, and beard all overgrown,
 That well he seemed to be some wight forlorn;
 Down to the earth his heavy eyes were thrown,
 As loathing light; and ever as he went
 He sighèd soft, and inly deep did groan,
 As if his heart in pieces would have rent.

Approaching nigh, his face I viewèd near,
 And by the semblant‡ of his countenance
 Me seemed I had his person seen elsewhere,
 Most like Alcyon seeming at a glance;
 Alcyon he, the jolly Shepherd swain
 That wont full merrily to pipe and dance,
 And fill with pleasance every wood and plain.

* nor.

† approach.

‡ semblance.

- Yet half in doubt, because of his disguise,
I softly said, "Alcyon!" There-with-all
He looked aside as in disdainfull wise,
Yet stayèd not, till I again did call:
Then, turning back, he said, with hollow sound,
"Who is it that doth name me, woeful thrall,
The wretched'st man that treads this day on ground?"
- "One, whom like woefulness, impressèd deep,
Hath made fit mate thy wretched case to hear,
And given like cause with thee to wail and weep;
Grief finds some ease by him that like does bear.
Then stay, Alcyon, gentle shepherd! stay,
(Quoth I) till thou have to my trusty ear
Committed what thee doth so ill apay."*
- "Cease, foolish man!" (said he, half wrothfully)
- "To seek to hear that which cannot be told,
For the huge anguish, which doth multiply
My dying pains, no tongue can well unfold;
Ne do I care that any should bemoan
My hard mishap, or any weep that would,
But seek alone to weep, and die alone."
- "Then be it so," (quoth I) "that thou art bent
To die alone, unpitièd, unplained;
Yet, ere thou die, it were convenient
To tell the cause which thee thereto constrained,
Lest that the world thee dead accuse of guilt,
And say, when thou of none shalt be maintained,
That thou for secret crime thy blood hast spilt."
- "Who life does loathe, and longs to be unbound
From the strong shackles of frail flesh," quoth he,
"Nought cares at all what they, that live on ground,
Deem the occasion of his death to be;
Rather desires to be forgotten quite,
Than question made of his calamity,
For hearts deep sorrow hates both life and light.

* please.

" Yet since so much thou seem'st to rue my grief,
And car'st for one that for himself cares nought,
(Sign of thy love, though nought for my relief,
For my relief exceedeth living thought ;)
I will to thee this heavy case relate :
Then hearken well till it to end be brought,
For never didst thou hear more hapless fate.

" Whilom I used (as thou right well dost know)
My little flock on western downs to keep,
Not far from whence Sabrina's stream doth flow,
And flowery banks with silver liquor steep ;
Nought cared I then for worldly change or chance,
For all my joy was on my gentle sheep,
And to my pipe to carol and to dance.

" It there befel, as I the fields did range
Fearless and free, a fair young Lioness,
White as the native Rose before the change
Which Venus blood did in her leaves impress,
I spied playing on the grassy plain
Her youthful sports and kindly wantonness,
That did all other Beasts in beauty stain.

" Much was I movèd at so goodly sight,
Whose like before mine eye had seldom seen,
And 'gan to cast how I her compass might,
And bring to hand that yet had never been ;
So well I wrought with mildness and with pain,
That I her caught disporting on the green,
And brought away fast bound with silver chain.

" And afterwards I handled her so fair,
That though by kind she stout and savage were,
For being born an ancient Lion's heir,
And of the race that all wild beasts do fear,
Yet I her framed, and won so to my bent,
That she became so meek and mild of cheer,
As the least lamb in all my flock that went :

“ For she in field, wherever I did wend,
Would wend with me, and wait by me all day ;
And all the night that I in watch did spend,
If cause required, or else in sleep, if nay,
She would all night by me or watch or sleep ;
And evermore when I did sleep or play,
She of my flock would take full wary keep.

“ Safe then, and safest were my silly sheep,
Ne feared the Wolf, ne feared the wildest beast,
All were I drowned in careless, quiet deep ;
My lovely Lioness without behest,
So careful was for them, and for my good,
That when I wakèd, neither most nor least,
I found miscarried or in plain or wood.

“ Oft did the Shepherds which my hap did hear,
And oft their lasses, which my luck envied,
Daily resort to me from far and near,
To see my Lioness, whose praises wide
Were spread abroad ; and when her worthiness,
Much greater than the rude report they tried,
They her did praise, and my good fortune bless.

“ Long thus I joyèd in my happiness,
And well did hope my joy would have no end ;
But oh, fond man ! that in world's fickleness
Reposedst hope, or weenedst her thy friend
That glories most in mortal miseries,
And daily doth her changeeful counsels bend,
To make new matter fit for Tragedies ;

“ For whilst I was thus without dread or doubt,
A cruel Satyr with his murd'rous dart,
Greedy of mischief, ranging all about,
Gave her the fatal wound of deadly smart,
And reft from me my sweet companion,
And reft from me my love, my life, my heart :
My Lioness (ah, woe is me !) is gone !

"Out of the world thus was she reft away,
 Out of the world, unworthy such a spoil,
 And borne to heaven, for heaven a fitter prey ;
 Much fitter than the Lion, which with toil
 Alcides slew, and fixed in firmament ;
 Her now I seek throughout this earthly soil,
 And seeking miss, and missing do lament."

Therewith he 'gan afresh to wail and weep,
 That I for pity of his heavy plight
 Could not abstain mine eyes with tears to steep ;
 But when I saw the anguish of his spright
 Some deal allayed, I him bespake again ;

"Certès, Alcyon, painful is thy plight,
 That it in me breeds almost equal pain.

"Yet doth not my dull wit well understand
 The riddle of thy lovèd Lioness ;
 For rare it seems in reason to be scanned,
 That man, who doth the whole world's rule possess,
 Should to a beast his noble heart embase,
 And be the vassal of his vassaless ;
 Therefore more plain aread this doubtful case."

Then sighing sore, "Daphne thou knew'st," quoth he,
 "She nòw is dead" ; ne more endured to say,
 But fell to ground for great extremity ;
 That I, beholding it, with deep dismay
 Was much appalled, and, lightly him uprearing,
 Revokèd life, that would have fled away,
 All were my self, through grief, in deadly drearing.

Then 'gan I him to comfort all my best,
 And with mild counsel strove to mitigate
 The stormy passion of his troubled breast,
 But he thereby was more empassionate ;
 As stubborn steed, that is with curb restrained,
 Becomes more fierce and fervent in his gait ;
 And, breaking forth at last, thus dearly * plained :

* secretly, sadly.

I

“ What man henceforth that breatheth vital air
Will honour heaven, or heavenly powers adore,
Which so unjustly do their judgments share
'Mongst earthly wights, as to afflict so sore
The innocent, as those which do transgress,
And do not spare the best or fairest, more
Than worst or foulest, but do both oppress?

“ If this be right, why did they then create
The world so fair, sith fairness is neglected?
Or why be they themselves immaculate,
If purest things be not by them respected?
She fair, she pure, most fair, most pure she was,
Yet was by them as thing impure rejected;
Yet she in pureness heaven itself did pass.

“ In pureness and in all celestial grace,
That men admire in goodly womankind,
She did excel, and seemed of angels race,
Living on earth like angel new divinde,*
Adorned with wisdom and with chastity,
And all the dowries of a noble mind,
Which did her beauty much more beautify.

“ No age hath bred (since fair Astraea left
The sinful world) more virtue in a wight;
And, when she parted hence, with her she reft
Great hope, and robbed her race of bounty quite.
Well may the shepherd lasses now lament;
For double loss by her hath on them light,
To lose both her and bounty's ornament.

“ Ne let Elisa, royal Shepherdess,
The praises of my parted love envy,
For she hath praises in all plenteousness
Poured upon her, like showers of Castaly,

* deified.

By her own Shepherd, Colin, her own Shepherd,
That her with heavenly hymns doth deify,
Of rustic muse full hardly to be bettered.

“ She is the Rose, the glory of the day,
And mine the Primrose in the lowly shade :
Mine, ah ! not mine ; amiss I mine did say :
Not mine, but His, which mine awhile her made ;
Mine to be His, with Him to live for aye.
Oh that so fair a flower so soon should fade,
And through untimely tempest fall away !

“ She fell away in her first age’s spring,
Whilst yet her leaf was green, and fresh her rind,
And whilst her branch fair blossoms forth did bring,
She fell away against all course of kind.
For age to die is right, but youth is wrong ;
She fell away like fruit blown down with winde.
Weep, Shepherd ! weep, to make my under-song.

II

“ What heart so stony-hard but that would weep,
And pour forth fountains of incessant tears ?
What Timon but would let compassion creep
Into his breast, and pierce his frozen ears ?
In stead of tears, whose brackish bitter well,
I wasted have, my heart-blood dropping wears,
To think to ground how that fair blossom fell.

“ Yet fell she not as one enforced to die,
Ne died with dread and grudging discontent,
But as one toiled with travel down doth lie,
So lay she down, as if to sleep she went,
And closed her eyes with careless quietness ;
The whiles soft death away her spirit hent,*
And soul assoiled from sinful fleshliness.

* took.

“ Yet ere that life her lodging did forsake,
She, all resolved, and ready to remove,
Calling to me (ay me!) this wise bespake ;

‘ Alcyon! ah, my first and latest love!
Ah! why does my Alcyon weep and mourn,
And grieve my ghost, that ill mote him behove,
As if to me had chanced some evil turn!

“ I, since the messenger is come for me,
That summons souls unto the bridal feast
Of his great Lord, must needs depart from thee,
And straight obey His sovereign behest ;
Why should Alcyon then so sore lament
That I from misery shall be released,
And freed from wretched long imprisonment !

“ Our days are full of dolour and disease,
Our life afflicted with incessant pain,
That nought on earth may lessen or appease ;
Why then should I desire here to remain !
Or why should he, that loves me, sorry be
For my deliverance, or at all complain
My good to hear, and toward joys to see!

“ I go, and long desired have to go ;
I go with gladness to my wished rest,
Whereas * no world’s sad care, nor wasting woe
May come their happy quiet to molest ;
But Saints and Angels in celestial thrones
Eternally Him praise that hath them blest ;
There shall I be amongst those blessed ones.

“ Yet, ere I go, a pledge I leave with thee
Of the late love the which betwixt us passed,
My young Ambrosia ; in lieu of me,
Love her ; so shall our love for ever last.
Thus, dear ! adieu, whom I expect ere long.’
So having said, away she softly passed :
Weep, Shepherd ! weep, to make mine under-song.

* where.

III

- “ So oft as I record those piercing words,
Which yet are deep engraven in my breast,
And those last deadly accents, which like swords
Did wound my heart, and rend my bleeding chest,
With those sweet sugared speeches do compare,
The which my soul first conquered and possest,
The first beginners of my endless care ;
- “ And when those pallid cheeks and ashy hue,
In which sad Death his portraiture had writ,
And when those hollow eyes and deadly view,
On which the cloud of ghastly night did sit,
I match with that sweet smile and cheerful brow,
Which all the world subdued unto it,
How happy was I then, and wretched now !
- “ How happy was I when I saw her lead
The Shepherds’ daughters dancing in a round !
How trimly would she trace and softly tread
The tender grass, with rosy garland crowned !
And when she list advance her heavenly voice,
Both Nymphs and Muses nigh she made astound,
And flocks and shepherds causèd to rejoice.
- “ But now, ye Shepherd lasses ! who shall lead
Your wandering troops, or sing your virelayes ? *
Or who shall dight your bowers, sith she is dead
That was the Lady of your holy-days ?
Let now your bliss be turnèd into bale,
And into plaints convert your joyous plays,
And with the same fill every hill and dale.
- “ Let Bagpipe never more be heard to shrill,
That may allure the senses to delight,
Ne ever Shepherd sound his Oaten quill
Unto the many that provoke them might

* light songs.

To idle pleasance ; but let ghastliness
And dreary horror dim the cheerful light,
To make the image of true heaviness :

“ Let birds be silent on the naked spray,
And shady woods resound with dreadful yells ;
Let streaming floods their hasty courses stay,
And parching drought dry up the crystal wells ;
Let th’ earth be barren, and bring forth no flowers,
And th’ air be filled with noise of doleful knells,
And wandering spirits walk untimely hours.

“ And Nature, nurse of every living thing,
Let rest herself from her long weariness,
And cease henceforth things kindly forth to bring,
But hideous monsters full of ugliness ;
For she it is that hath me done this wrong,
No nurse, but Stepdame, cruel, merciless.
Weep, Shepherd ! weep, to make my under-song.

IV

“ My little flock, whom erst I loved so well,
And wont to feed with finest grass that grew,
Feed ye henceforth on bitter Astrofel,
And stinking Smallage, and unsavoury Rue ;
And, when your maws are with those weeds
 corrupted,
Be ye the prey of Wolves ; ne will I rue
That with your carcasses wild beasts be glutted.

“ Ne worse to you, my silly sheep ! I pray,
Ne sorer vengeance wish on you to fall
Than to myself, for whose confused decay
To careless heavens I do daily call ;
But heavens refuse to hear a wretch’s cry ;
And cruel Death doth scorn to come at call,
Or grant his boon that most desires to die.

- “ The good and righteous he away doth take,
To plague th’ unrighteous which alive remain ;
But the ungodly ones he doth forsake,
By living long to multiply their pain ;
Else surely death should be no punishment,
As the Great Judge at first did it ordain,
But rather riddance from long languishment.
- “ Therefore, my Daphne they have ta’en away ;
For worthy of a better place was she :
But me unworthy willèd here to stay,
That with her lack I might tormented be.
Sith then they so have ordered, I will pay
Penance to her, according their decree,
And to her ghost do service day by day.
- “ For I will walk this wandering pilgrimage,
Throughout the world from one to other end,
And in affliction waste my better age :
My bread shall be the anguish of my mind,
My drink the tears which from mine eyes do rain,
My bed the ground that hardest I may find ;
So will I wilfully increase my pain.
- “ And she, my love that was, my Saint that is,
When she beholds from her celestial throne
(In which she joyeth in eternal bliss)
My bitter penance, will my case bemoan,
And pity me that living thus do die ;
For heavenly spirits have compassion
On mortal men, and rue their misery.
- “ So when I have with sorrow satisfied
Th’ importune fates, which vengeance on me seek,
And th’ heavens with long languour pacified,
She, for pure pity of my sufferance meek,
Will send for me ; for which I daily long ;
And will till then my painful penance eke.
Weep, Shepherd ! weep, to make my under-song.

V

- "Henceforth I hate whatever Nature made,
And in her workmanship no pleasure find,
For they be all but vain, and quickly fade ;
So soon as on them blows the Northern wind,
They tarry not, but flit and fall away,
Leaving behind them nought but grief of mind,
And mocking such as think they long will stay.
- "I hate the heaven, because it doth withhold
Me from my love, and eke my love from me ;
I hate the earth, because it is the mould
Of fleshly slime and frail mortality ;
I hate the fire, because to nought it flies ;
I hate the air, because sighs of it be ;
I hate the sea, because it tears supplies.
- "I hate the day, because it lendeth light
To see all things, and not my love to see ;
I hate the darkness and the dreary night,
Because they breed sad balefulness in me ;
I hate all times, because all times do fly
So fast away, and may not stayèd be,
But as a speedy post that passeth by.
- "I hate to speak, my voice is spent with crying ;
I hate to hear, loud complaints have dulled mine ears ;
I hate to taste, for food withholds my dying ;
I hate to see, mine eyes are dimmed with tears ;
I hate to smell, no sweet on earth is left ;
I hate to feel, my flesh is numbed with fears :
So all my senses from me are bereft.
- "I hate all men, and shun all womankind ;
The one, because as I they wretched are ;
The other, for because I do not find
My love with them, that wont to be their Star :
And life I hate, because it will not last ;
And death I hate, because it life doth mar ;
And all I hate that is to come or past.

- " So all the world, and all in it I hate,
Because it changeth ever to and fro,
And never standeth in one certain state,
But still unstedfast, round about doth go
Like a Mill-wheel in midst of misery,
Driven with streams of wretchedness and woe,
That dying lives, and living still does die.
- " So do I live, so do I daily die,
And pine away in self-consuming pain !
Sith she that did my vital powers supply,
And feeble spirits in their force maintain,
Is fetched from me, why seek I to prolong
My weary days in dolour and disdain?
Weep, Shepherd, weep, to make my under-song.

VI

- " Why do I longer live in life's despite,
And do not die then in despite of death ;
Why do I longer see this loathsome light,
And do in darkness not abridge my breath,
Sith all my sorrow shall have end thereby,
And cares find quiet ! Is it so uneath
To leave this life, or dolorous to die ?
- " To live I find it deadly dolorous,
For life draws care, and care continual woe ;
Therefore to die must needs be joyous,
And wishful thing this sad life to forgo :
But I must stay ; I may it not amend,
My Daphne hence departing bade me so ;
She bade me stay, till she for me did send.
- " Yet, whilst I in this wretched vale do stay
My weary feet shall ever wandering be,
That still I may be ready on my way
When as her messenger doth come for me ;

Ne will I rest my feet for feebleness,
Ne will I rest my limbs for frailty,
Ne will I rest mine eyes for heaviness.

“ But, as the mother of the Gods, that sought
For fair Eurydice, her daughter dear,
Throughout the world, with woeful heavy thought;
So will I travel whilst I tarry here,
Ne will I lodge, ne will I ever lin,*
Ne, when as drooping Titan draweth near
To loose his team, will I take up my Inn.

“ Ne sleep (the harbinger of weary wights)
Shall ever lodge upon mine eyelids more;
Ne shall with rest refresh my fainting sprites,
Nor failing force to former strength restore:
But I will wake and sorrow all the night
With Philumene, my fortune to deplore;
With Philumene, the partner of my plight.

“ And ever as I see the stars to fall,
And underground to go to give them light
Which dwell in darkness, I to mind will call
How my fair Star (that shined on me so bright)
Fell suddenly, and faded underground;
Since whose departure, day is turned to night,
And night without a Venus star is found.

“ But soon as day doth show his dewy face,
And calls forth men unto their toilsome trade,
I will withdraw me to some darksome place,
Or some deep cave, or solitary shade;
There will I sigh, and sorrow all day long,
And the huge burden of my cares unlade.
Weep, Shepherd! weep, to make my under-song.

* cease.

VII

- “Henceforth mine eyes shall never more behold
Fair thing on earth, ne feed on false delight
Of ought that framèd is of mortal mould,
Sith that my fairest flower is faded quite ;
For all I see is vain and transitory,
Ne will be held in any stedfast plight,
But in a moment lose their grace and glory.
- “And ye fond men ! on fortune’s wheel that ride,
Or in ought under Heaven repose assurance,
Be it riches, beauty, or honour’s pride,
Be sure that they shall have no long endurance,
But ere ye be aware will flit away ;
For nought of them is yours, but th’ only usance
Of a small time, which none ascertain may.
- “And ye, true Lovers ! whom disastrous chance
Hath far exilèd from your Ladies’ grace,
To mourn in sorrow and sad sufferance,
When ye do hear me in that desert place
Lamenting loud my Daphne’s Elegy,
Help me to wail my miserable case,
And when life parts vouchsafe to close mine eye.
- “And ye, more happy Lovers ! which enjoy
The presence of your dearest love’s delight,
When ye do hear my sorrowful annoy,
Yet pity me in your empassioned sprite,
And think that such mishap, as chanced to me,
May happen unto the most happiest wight ;
For all men’s states alike unstedfast be.
- “And ye, my fellow Shepherds ! which do feed
Your careless flocks on hills and open plains,
With better fortune than did me succeed,
Remember yet my undeservèd pains ;

And, when ye hear that I am dead or slain,
Lament my lot, and tell your fellow-swains,
That sad Alcyon died in life's disdain.

“And ye, fair Damsels! Shepherds' dear delights,
That with your loves do their rude hearts possess,
When as my hearse shall happen to your sights,
Vouchsafe to deck the same with Cyparesse;
And ever sprinkle brackish tears among,
In pity of my undeserved distress,
The which, I, wretch, endured have thus long.

“And ye, poor Pilgrims! that with restless toil
Weary yourselves in wandring desert ways,
Till that you come where ye your vows assoil,*
When passing by ye read these woeful lays,
On my grave written, rue my Daphne's wrong,
And mourn for me that languish out my days.
Cease, Shepherd! cease, and end thy under-song.”

Thus when he ended had his heavy plaint,
The heaviest plaint that ever I heard sound,
His cheeks waxed pale, and sprites began to faint,
As if again he would have fallen to ground;
Which, when I saw, I (stepping to him light)
Amovèd him out of his stony swound,
And 'gan him to re-comfort as I might.

But he no way re-comforted would be,
Nor suffer solace to approach him nigh,
But casting up a 'sdainful eye at me,
That in his trance I would not let him lie,
Did rend his hair, and beat his blubbered face,
As one disposèd wilfully to die,
That I sore grieved to see his wretched case.

* pay.

Tho * when the pang was somewhat overpassed,
 And the outrageous passion nigh appeased,
 I him desired sith day was overcast,
 And dark night fast approachèd, to be pleased
 To turn aside unto my Cabinet,
 And stay with me, till he were better eased
 Of that strong stound which him so sore beset.

But by no means I could him win thereto,
 Ne longer him intreat with me to stay,
 But without taking leave he forth did go
 With staggering pace and dismal looks' dismay,
 As if that death he in the face had seen,
 Or hellish hags had met upon the way;
 But what of him became I cannot ween.

Edmund Spenser,
 1552—1598.

A FUNERAL ELEGY

[From "*An Anatomy of the world; Wherein, by occasion of the untimely death of Mrs Elizabeth Drury, the frailty and the decay of this whole world is represented*"; with the "*First Anniversary*" of which, it was first published in 1611. The *Second Anniversary* was added to the second edition of 1612.]

'Tis loss to trust a tomb with such a guest,
 Or to confine her in a marble chest.
 Alas! what's marble, jet, or porphyry,
 Prized with the chrysolite of either eye,
 Or with those pearls and rubies which she was?
 Join the two Indies in one tomb, 'tis glass;
 And so is all, to her materials,
 Though every inch were ten Escurials;
 Yet she's demolished; can we keep her then
 In works of hands, or of the wits of men?
 Can these memorials, rags of paper, give
 Life to that name, by which name they must live?

* then.

Sickly, alas ! short lived, abortive be
Those carcase verses, whose soul is not she ;
And can she, who no longer would be she,
Being such a tabernacle stoop to be
In paper wrapped : or when she would not lie
In such a house, dwell in an elegy ?
But 'tis no matter : we may well allow
Verse to live so long as the world will now,
For her death wounded it. The world contains
Princes for arms and counsellors for brains,
Lawyers for tongues, divines for hearts, and more,
The rich for stomachs, and for backs the poor ;
The officers for hands, merchants for feet,
By which remote and distant countries meet :
But those fine spirits, which do tune and set
This organ, are those pieces which beget
Wonder and love ; and these were she : and she
Being spent, the world must needs decrepit be.
For since death will proceed to triumph still,
He can find nothing, after her, to kill,
Except the world itself, so great as she.
Thus brave and confident may nature be,
Death cannot give her such another blow,
Because she cannot such another show.
But must we say she's dead ? may't not be said,
That as a sundered clock is piecemeal laid,
Not to be lost, but by the maker's hand
Repolished without error then to stand,
Or as the Afric Niger stream enwombs
Itself into the earth, and after comes
—Having first made a natural bridge, to pass
For many leagues—far greater than it was,
May't not be said, that her grave shall restore
Her, greater, purer, firmer than before ?
Heaven may say this, and joy in't but can we
Who live, and lack her here, this vantage see ?
What is't to us, alas ! if there have been
An angel made, a throne, or cherubin ?

We lose by't : and as agèd men are glad
Being tasteless grown, to joy in joys they had,
So now the sick, starved world must feed upon
This joy, that we had her, who now is gone.
Rejoice, then, nature, and this world, that you,
Fearing the last fires hastening to subdue
Your force and vigour, ere it were near gone,
Wisely bestowed and laid it all on one ;
One, whose clear body was so pure and thin,
Because it need disguise no thought within ;
'Twas but a through-light scarf her mind to enroll,
Or exhalation breathed out from her soul ;
One whom all men, who durst no more, admired ;
And whom, whoe'er had worth enough, desired ;
As when a temple's built saints emulate
To which of them it shall be consecrate.
But as, when heaven looks on us with new eyes,
Those new stars every artist exercise ;
What place they should assign to them they doubt,
Argue, and agree not, till those stars go out ;
So the world studied whose this piece should be,
Till she can be nobody's else, nor she ;
But like a lump of balsamum, desired
Rather to adorn than last, she soon expired.
Clothed in her virgin white integrity
—For marriage, though it doth not stain, doth dye—
To escape the infirmities which wait upon
Woman, she went away before she was one ;
And the world's busy noise to overcome,
Took so much death as served for opium ;
For though she could not, nor could choose to die,
She hath yielded to too long an ecstasy.
He which, not knowing her sad history,
Should come to read the book of destiny,
How fair, and chaste, humble and high she'd been
Much promised, much performed, at not fifteen,
And measuring future things by things before,
Should turn the leaf to read, and read no more,

Would think that either destiny mistook,
 Or that some leaves were torn out of the book.
 But 'tis not so : fate did but usher her
 To years of reason's use, and then infer
 Her destiny to herself, which liberty
 She took, but for thus much, thus much to die.
 Her modesty not suffering her to be
 Fellow-commissioner with destiny,
 She did no more but die : if after her
 Any shall live, which dare true good prefer,
 Every such person is her delegate,
 To accomplish that which should have been her fate.
 They shall make up that book and shall have thanks
 Of fate, and her, for filling up their blanks ;
 For future virtuous deeds are legacies
 Which from the gift of her example rise ;
 And 'tis in heaven part of spiritual mirth,
 To see how well the good play her, on earth.

John Donne,
 1573—1631.



ELEGY

On my Muse the truly honoured Lady, the Lady Venetia
 Digby ; who living, gave me leave to call her so.
 Being her ἀποθέωσις, or Relation to the Saints.

[From "*Eupheme or the Fair Fame left to Posterity of that Truly
 noble Lady the Lady Venetia Digby, Late Wife of Sir
 Kenelme Digby, Knt.*," of which it is Part IX.*]

'Twere time that I died too, now she is dead,
 Who was my Muse, and life of all I said ;
 The spirit that I wrote with, and conceived :
 All that was good, or great with me, she weaved,

* From "*Underwoods : consisting of Divers Poems*," 1641,
 part of the second folio edition.

And set it forth ; the rest were cobwebs fine,
Spun out in name of some of the old Nine,
To hang a window, or make dark the room,
Till swept away, they were cancelled with a broom !
Nothing that could remain, or yet can stir
A sorrow in me, fit to wait to her !
O ! had I seen her laid out a fair corse,
By death, on earth, I should have had remorse
On Nature for her : who did let her lie,
And saw that portion of herself to die.
Sleepy or stupid Nature, couldst thou part
With such a rarity, and not rouse Art,
With all her aids, to save her from the seize
Of vulture Death, and those relentless cleis* ?
Thou wouldst have lost the Phoenix, had the kind
Been trusted to thee ; not to itself assigned.
Look on thy sloth, and give thyself undone,
(For so thou art with me) now she is gone :
My wounded mind cannot sustain this stroke,
It rages, runs, flies, stands, and would provoke
The world to ruin with it ; in her fall,
I sum up mine own breaking, and wish all.
Thou hast no more blows, Fate, to drive at one ;
What's left a poet, when his Muse is gone ?
Sure I am dead and know it not ! I feel
Nothing I do ; but like a heavy wheel,
Am turnèd with another's powers : my passion
Whirls me about, and, to blaspheme in fashion,
I murmur against God, for having ta'en
Her blessed soul hence, forth this valley vain
Of tears, and dungeon of calamity !
I envy it the angels amity,
The joy of saints, the crown for which it lives,
The glory and gain of rest, which the place gives !
Dare I profane so irreligious be,
To greet or grieve her soft euthanasy !

* claws.

So sweetly taken to the court of bliss
As spirits had stolen her spirit in a kiss,
From off her pillow and deluded bed ;
And left her lovely body unthought dead !
Indeed she is not dead ! but laid to sleep
In earth, till the last trump awake the sheep
And goats together, whither they must come
To hear their judge, and his eternal doom ;
To have that final retribution,
Expected with the flesh's restitution.
For, as there are three natures, schoolmen call
One corporal only, the other spiritual,
Like single ; so there is a third commixt,
Of body and spirit together, placed betwixt
Those other two ; which must be judged or crowned :
This, as it guilty is, or guiltless found,
Must come to take a sentence, by the sense
Of that great evidence, the Conscience,
Who will be there, against that day prepared,
To accuse or quit all parties be heard !
O day of joy, and surety to the just,
Who in that feast of resurrection trust !
That great eternal holy day of rest
To body and soul, where love is all the guest !
And the whole banquet is full sight of God,
Of joy the circle, and sole period !
All other gladness with the thought is barred ;
Hope hath her end, and Faith hath her reward !

This being thus, why should my tongue or pen
Presume to interpel that fulness, when
Nothing can more adorn it than the seat
That she is in, or make it more complete ?
Better be dumb than superstitious :
Who violates the Godhead is most vicious
Against the nature he would worship. He
Will honoured be in all simplicity,
Have all his actions wondered at, and viewed
With silence and amazement ; not with rude,

Dull and profane, weak and imperfect eyes,
Have busy search made in his mysteries !
He knows what work he hath done, to call this guest,
Out of her noble body to this feast :
And give her place according to her blood
Amongst her peers, those princes of all good !
Saints, Martyrs, Prophets, with those Hierarchies,
Angels, Arch-angels, Principalities,
The Dominations, Virtues, and the Powers,
The Thrones, the Cherubs, and Seraphic bowers,
That, planted round, there sing before the Lamb
A new song to his praise, and great I AM :
And she doth know, out of the shade of death,
What 'tis to enjoy an everlasting breath !
To have her captived spirit freed from flesh,
And on her innocence, a garment fresh
And white as that put on : and in her hand
With boughs of palm, a crownèd victrix stand !

And will you, worthy son, sir, knowing this,
Put black and mourning on ? and say you miss
A wife, a friend, a lady, or a love ;
Whom her Redeemer honoured hath above
Her fellows, with the oil of gladness, bright
In heaven's empire, and with a robe of light ?
Thither you hope to come ; and there to find
That pure, that precious, and exalted mind
You once enjoyed : a short space severs ye,
Compared unto that long eternity,
That shall rejoin ye. Was she, then, so dear,
When she departed ? you will meet her there,
Much more desired, and dearer than before,
By all the wealth of blessings, and the store
Accumulated on her, by the Lord
Of life and light, the son of God, the Word !

There all the happy souls that ever were,
Shall meet with gladness in one theatre ;
And each shall know there one another's face,
By beatific virtue of the place.

There shall the brother with the sister walk,
And sons and daughters with their parents talk ;
But all of God ; they still shall have to say,
But make him All in All, their Theme, that day ;
That happy day that never shall see night !
Where he will be all beauty to the sight ;
Wine or delicious fruits unto the taste ;
A music in the ears will ever last ;
Unto the scent, a spicery or balm ;
And to the touch, a flower like soft as palm.
He will all glory, all perfection be,
God in the Union, and the Trinity !
That holy, great and glorious mystery,
Will there revealèd be in majesty !
By light and comfort of spiritual grace :
The vision of our Saviour face to face
In his humanity ! to hear him preach
The price of our redemption, and to teach
Through his inherent righteousness, in death,
The safety of our souls, and forfeit breath !

What fulness of beatitude is here ?
What love with mercy mixèd doth appear,
To style us friends, who were by nature foes ?
Adopt us heirs by grace, who were of those
Had lost ourselves, and prodigally spent
Our native portions, and possessèd rent ?
Yet have all debts forgiven us, and advance
By imputed right to an inheritance
In his eternal kingdom, where we sit
Equal with angels, and co-heirs of it.
Nor dare we under blasphemy conceive
He that shall be our supreme judge, shall leave
Himself so uninformed of his elect,
Who knows the hearts of all, and can dissect
The smallest fibre of our flesh ; he can
Find all our atoms from a point to a span :
Our closest creeks and corners, and can trace
Each line, as it were graphic, in the face.

And best he knew her noble character,
For 'twas himself who formed and gave it her.
And to that form lent two such veins of blood,
As nature could not more increase the flood
Of title in her ! all nobility
But pride, that schism of incivility,
She had, and it became her ! she was fit
To have known no envy, but by suffering it !
She had a mind as calm as she was fair ;
Not tossed or troubled with light lady-air,
But kept an even gait, as some straight tree
Moved by the wind, so comely movèd she.
And by the awful manage of her eye,
She swayed all business in the family.
To one she said, do this, he did it ; so
To another, move, he went ; to a third, go,
He ran ; and all did strive with diligence
To obey, and serve her sweet commandements.

She was in one a many parts of life ;
A tender mother, a discreeter wife,
A solemn mistress, and so good a friend,
So charitable to religious end
In all her petite actions, so devote,
As her whole life was now become one note
Of piety and private holiness.
She spent more time in tears herself to dress
For her devotions, and those sad essays
Of sorrow, than all pomp of gaudy days ;
And came forth ever cheerèd with the rod
Of divine comfort, when she had talked with God.
Her broken sighs did never miss whole sense ;
Nor can the bruised heart want eloquence :
For prayer is the incense most perfumes
The holy altars, when it least presumes.
And hers were all humility ! they beat
The door of grace, and found the mercy-seat.
In frequent speaking by the pious psalms
Her solemn hours she spent, or giving alms,

Or doing other deeds of charity,
To clothe the naked, feed the hungry. She
Would sit in an infirmary whole days
Poring, as on a map, to find the ways
To that eternal rest, where now she hath place
By sure election and predestined grace!
She saw her Saviour, by an early light,
Incarnate in the manger, shining bright
On all the world! she saw him on the cross
Suff'ring and dying to redeem our loss:
She saw him rise triumphing over death,
To justify and quicken us in breath;
She saw him too in glory to ascend
For his designèd work the perfect end
Of raising, judging and rewarding all
The kind of man, on whom his doom should fall!

All this by faith she saw, and framed a plea,
In manner of a daily apostrophe,
To him should be her judge, true God, true Man,
Jesus, the only-gotten Christ! who can,
As being redeemer and repairer too
Of lapsèd nature, best know what to do,
In that great act of judgment, which the father
Hath given wholly to the son (the rather
As being the son of man) to show his power,
His wisdom, and his justice, in that hour,
The last of hours, and shutter up of all;
Where first his power will appear, by call
Of all are dead to life; his wisdom show
In the discerning of each conscience so;
And most his justice, in the fitting parts,
And giving dues to all mankind's deserts!

In this sweet ecstasy she was rapt hence.
Who reads, will pardon my intelligence,
That thus have ventured these true strains upon,
To publish her a saint. MY MUSE IS GONE!

Ben Jonson,
1573?—1637.

To
 The Pious Memory
 Of the Accomplished Young Lady,
 Mrs. ANNE KILLIGREW,
 Excellent in
 The Two Sister Arts
 of
 Poesy and Painting.
 An Ode.

[*First printed in "Poems by Mrs Anne Killigrew, 1686."*]

Thou youngest virgin-daughter of the skies,
 Made in the last promotion of the blest ;
 Whose palms, new plucked from paradise,
 In spreading branches more sublimely rise,
 Rich with immortal green above the rest ;
 Whether, adopted to some neighbouring star,
 Thou roll'st above us in thy wandering race,
 Or, in procession fixed and regular,
 Mov'st with the heaven's majestic pace ;
 Or, called to more superior bliss,
 Thou tread'st with seraphims the vast abyss :
 Whatever happy region is thy place,
 Cease thy celestial song a little space ;
 Thou wilt have time enough for hymns divine,
 Since Heaven's eternal year is thine.
 Hear, then, a mortal muse thy praise rehearse,
 In no ignoble verse ;
 But such as thy own voice did practise here,
 When thy first fruits of poesy were given,
 To make thyself a welcome inmate there ;
 While yet a young probationer,
 And candidate of heaven.

II

If by traduction came thy mind,
 Our wonder is the less to find
~~A soul so charming from a stock so good ;~~
~~Thy father was transfused into thy blood :—~~
 So wert thou born into a tuneful strain,
 An early, rich, and inexhausted vein.
 But if thy pre-existing soul
 Was formed, at first, with myriads more,
 It did through all the mighty poets roll,
 Who Greek or Latin laurels wore,
 And was that Sappho last, which once it was before.
 If so, then cease thy flight, O heaven-born mind !
 Thou hast no dross to purge from thy rich ore :
 Nor can thy soul a fairer mansion find,
 Than was the beauteous frame she left behind :
 Return to fill or mend the choir of thy celestial kind.

III

May we presume to say, that, at thy birth,
 New joy was sprung in Heaven, as well as here on
 earth?
 For sure the milder planets did combine
 On thy auspicious horoscope to shine,
 And e'en the most malicious were in trine.
 Thy brother-angels at thy birth
 Strung each his lyre, and tuned it high,
 That all the people of the sky
 Might know a poetess was born on earth ;
 And then, if ever, mortal ears
 Had heard the music of the spheres.
 And if no clustering swarm of bees
 On thy sweet mouth distilled their golden dew,
 'Twas that such vulgar miracles
 Heaven had not leisure to renew :
 For all the blest fraternity of love
 Solemnised there thy birth, and kept thy holiday above.

IV

O gracious God! how far have we
Profaned thy heavenly gift of poesy?
Made prostitute and profligate the muse,
Debased to each obscene and impious use,
Whose harmony was first ordained above
For tongues of angels, and for hymns of love?
O wretched we! why were we hurried down
This lubrique and adulterate age,
(Nay, added fat pollutions of our own)
T' increase the steaming ordures of the stage?
What can we say t' excuse our second fall?
Let this thy vestal, heaven, atone for all:
Her Arethusian stream remains unsoiled,
Unmixed with foreign filth, and undefiled;
Her wit was more than man, her innocence a child.

V

Art she had none, yet wanted none;
For Nature did that want supply:
So rich in treasures of her own,
She might our boasted stores defy:
Such noble vigour did her verse adorn,
That it seemed borrowed where 'twas only born.
Her morals, too, were in her bosom bred,
By great examples daily fed,
What in the best of books, her father's life, she read:
And to be read herself she need not fear;
Each test, and every light, her muse will bear,
Though Epictetus with his lamp were there.
E'en love (for love sometimes her muse exprest)
Was but a lambent flame which played about her breast:
Light as the vapours of a morning dream,
So cold herself, whilst she such warmth exprest,
'Twas Cupid bathing in Diana's stream.

VI

Born to the spacious empire of the Nine,
 One would have thought she should have been content
 To manage well that mighty government;
 But what can young ambitious souls confine?
 To the next realm she stretched her sway,
 For Painture near adjoining lay,
 A plenteous province, and alluring prey.
 A chamber of dependencies was framed,
 (As conquerers will never want pretence,
 When armed, to justify the offence,)
 And the whole fief, in right of poetry, she claimed.
 The country open lay without defence;
 For poets frequent inroads there had made,
 And perfectly could represent
 The shape, the face, with every lineament,
 And all the large domains which the Dumb Sister
 swayed;
 All bowed beneath her government,
 Received in triumph wheresoe'er she went.
 Her pencil drew whate'er her soul designed,
 And oft the happy draught surpassed the image in her mind.
 The sylvan scenes of herds and flocks,
 And fruitful plains and barren rocks,
 Of shallow brooks that flowed so clear,
 The bottom did the top appear;
 Of deeper too and ampler floods,
 Which, as in mirrors, showed the woods;
 Of lofty trees, with sacred shades,
 And perspectives of pleasant glades,
 Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
 And shaggy satyrs standing near,
 Which them at once admire and fear.
 The ruins, too, of some majestic piece,
 Boasting the power of ancient Rome or Greece,
 Whose statues, friezes, columns, broken lie,
 And, though defaced, the wonder of the eye;

What nature, art, bold fiction, e'er durst frame,
Her forming hand gave feature to the name.
So strange a concourse ne'er was seen before,
But when the peopled ark the whole creation bore.

VII

The scene then changed ; with bold erected look
Our martial king the sight with reverence strook :
For, not content to express his outward part,
Her hand called out the image of his heart :
His warlike mind, his soul devoid of fear,
His high-designing thoughts were figured there,
As when, by magic, ghosts are made appear.

Our phoenix-queen was pourtrayed too so bright,
Beauty alone could beauty take so right :
Her dress, her shape, her matchless grace,
Were all observed, as well as heavenly face.
With such a peerless majesty she stands,
As in that day she took the crown from sacred hands :
Before a train of heroines was seen,
In beauty foremost, as in rank, the queen.

Thus nothing to her genius was denied,
But like a ball of fire the further thrown,
Still with a greater blaze she shone,
And her bright soul broke out on every side.
What next she had designed, Heaven only knows :
To such immoderate growth her conquest rose,
That fate alone its progress could oppose.

VIII

Now all those charms, that blooming grace,
The well-proportioned shape, and beauteous face,
Shall never more be seen by mortal eyes ;
In earth the much-lamented virgin lies.

Not wit, nor piety, could fate prevent ;
 Nor was the cruel destiny content
 To finish all the murder at a blow,
 To sweep at once her life and beauty too ;
 But, like a hardened felon, took a pride
 To work more mischievously slow,
 And plundered first, and then destroyed.
 O double sacrilege on things divine,
 To rob the relic, and deface the shrine !
 But thus Orinda died ;

IX

Heaven, by the same disease, did both translate ;
 As equal were their souls, so equal was their fate.
 Meantime, her warlike brother on the seas
 His waving streamers to the winds displays,
 And vows for his return, with vain devotion, pays.
 Ah, generous youth ! that wish forbear,
 The winds too soon will waft thee here :
 Slack all thy sails, and fear to come ;
 Alas, thou know'st not, thou art wrecked at home !
 No more shalt thou behold thy sister's face,
 Thou hast already had her last embrace.
 But look aloft, and if thou ken'st from far
 Among the Pleiads a new-kindled star,
 If any sparkles than the rest more bright,
 'Tis she that shines in that propitious light.

X

When in mid-air the golden trump shall sound,
 To raise the nations under ground ;
 When in the valley of Jehosaphat,
 The judging God shall close the book of fate,
 And there the last assizes keep,
 For those who wake, and those who sleep ;

When rattling bones together fly,
 From the four corners of the sky;
 When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread,
 Those clothed with flesh, and life inspires the dead;
 The sacred poets first shall hear the sound,
 And foremost from the tomb shall bound,
 For they are covered with the lightest ground;
 And straight, with inborn vigour, on the wing,
 Like mounting larks, to the new morning sing.
 There thou, sweet saint, before the choir shalt go,
 As harbinger of heaven, the way to show,
 The way which thou so well hast learnt below.

John Dryden,
 1631—1700.



ELEGY

To the Memory of
 An Unfortunate Lady

[First printed in "*The Works of Mr Alexander Pope, London 1717*," 4to and folio. It is there entitled "*Verses to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady*." In the Edition of 1736, "*Elegy*" was substituted for "*Verses*."]

What beck'ning ghost, along the moonlight shade
 Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?
 'Tis she!—but why that bleeding bosom gored?
 Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?
 Oh, ever beauteous, ever friendly! tell,
 Is it, in heaven, a crime to love too well?
 To bear too tender, or too firm a heart,
 To act a lover's or a Roman's part?
 Is there no bright reversion in the sky,
 For those who greatly think, or bravely die?
 Why bade ye else, ye pow'rs! her soul aspire
 Above the vulgar flight of low desire?
 Ambition first sprung from your blessed abodes;
 The glorious fault of angels and of gods:

Thence to their images on earth it flows,
And in the breasts of kings and heroes glows.
Most souls, 'tis true, but peep out once an age,
Dull sullen pris'ners in the body's cage :
Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years
Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres ;
Like Eastern kings a lazy state they keep,
And, close confined to their own palace, sleep.

From these perhaps (ere nature bade her die)
Fate snatched her early to the pitying sky.
As into air the purer spirits flow,
And sep'rate from their kindred dregs below ;
So flew the soul to its congenial place,
Nor left one virtue to redeem her race.

But thou, false guardian of a charge too good,
Thou mean deserter of thy brother's blood !
See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,
These cheeks now fading at the blast of death ;
Cold is that breast which warmed the world before,
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more.
Thus, if eternal justice rules the ball,
Thus shall your wives, and thus your children fall :
On all the line a sudden vengeance waits,
And frequent hearses shall besiege your gates ;
There passengers shall stand, and pointing say,
(While the long fun'rals blacken all the way)
"Lo! these were they, whose souls the furies steeled,
And cursed with hearts unknowing how to yield."
Thus, unlamented, pass the proud away,
The gaze of fools, and pageant of a day !
So perish all, whose breast ne'er learned to glow
For others' good, or melt at others' woe.

What can atone, oh ever-injured shade !
Thy fate unpitied, and thy rites unpaid ?
No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear
Pleased thy pale ghost, or graced thy mournful bier.
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were closed ;
By foreign hands thy decent limbs composed ;

By foreign hands thy humble grave adorned,
By strangers honoured, and by strangers mourned !
What though no friends in sable weeds appear,
Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a year,
And bear about the mockery of woe
To midnight dances, and the public show ?
What though no weeping loves thy ashes grace,
Nor polished marble emulate thy face ?
What though no sacred earth allow thee room,
Nor hallowed dirge be muttered o'er thy tomb ?
Yet shall thy grave with rising flow'rs be dressed,
And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast :
There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow ;
There the first roses of the year shall blow ;
While angels with their silver wings o'ershade
The ground, now sacred by thy reliques made.

So peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,
What once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fame.
How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not,
To whom related, or by whom begot ;
A heap of dust alone remains of thee ;
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be !

Poets themselves must fall like those they sung,
Deaf the praised ear, and mute the tuneful tongue.
Ev'n he, whose soul now melts in mournful lays,
Shall shortly want the gen'rous tear he pays ;
Then from his closing eyes thy form shall part,
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart,
Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
The muse forgot, and thou beloved no more !

Alexander Pope,
1688—1744.

AN ELEGY ON THE LADY JANE PAWLET,
MARCHIONESS OF WINTON

[From "*Underwoods: Consisting of Divers Poems*," 1641.
Part of 2nd folio edition.]

What gentle ghost, besprent with April dew,
Hails me so solemnly to yonder yew,
And beckoning woos me, from the fatal tree
To pluck a garland for herself or me?
I do obey you, beauty! for in death
You seem a fair one. O that you had breath
To give your shade a name! Stay, stay, I feel
A horror in me, all my blood is steel;
Stiff, stark! my joints 'gainst one another knock!
Whose daughter?—Ha! great Savage of the Rock.
He's good as great. I am almost a stone,
And ere I can ask more of her, she's gone!—
Alas, I am all marble! write the rest
Thou wouldst have written, Fame, upon my breast:
It is a large fair table, and a true,
And the disposure will be something new,
When I, who would the poet have become,
At least may bear the inscription to her tomb.
She was the Lady Jane, and marchionisse
Of Winchester; the heralds can tell this.
Earl Rivers' grandchild—'serve not forms, good Fame,
Sound thou her virtues, give her soul a name.
Had I a thousand mouths, as many tongues,
And voice to raise them from my brazen lungs,
I durst not aim at that; the dotes were such
Thereof, no notion can express how much
Their caract was: for my trump must break,
But rather I, should I of that part speak;
It is too near of kin to heaven, the soul,
To be described! Fame's fingers are too foul
To touch these mysteries: we may admire
The heat and splendour, but not handle fire.

What she did here, by great example, well,
T'inlive posterity, her Fame may tell;
And calling Truth to witness, make that good
From the inherent graces in her blood!
Else who doth praise a person by a new,
But a feigned way, doth rob it of the true.
Her sweetness, softness, her fair courtesy,
Her wary guards, her wise simplicity,
Were like a ring of Virtues 'bout her set,
And Piety the centre where all met.
A reverend state she had, an awful eye,
A dazzling, yet inviting, majesty:
What Nature, Fortune, Institution, Fact
Could sum to a perfection, was her act!
How did she leave the world, with what contempt
Just as she in it lived, and so exempt
From all affection! when they urged the cure
Of her disease, how did her soul assure
Her sufferings, as the body had been away!
And to the torturers, her doctors, say,
Stick on your cupping-glasses, fear not, put
Your hottest caustics to, burn, lance, or cut:
'Tis but a body which you can torment,
And I into the world all soul was sent.
Then comforted her lord, and blest her son,
Cheered her fair sisters in her race to run,
With gladness tempered her sad parents' tears,
Made her friends joys to get above their fears,
And in her last act taught the standers-by
With admiration and applause to die!
Let angels sing her glories, who did call
Her spirit home to her original;
Who saw the way was made it, and were sent
To carry and conduct the compliment
'Twixt death and life, where her mortality
Became her birth-day to eternity!
And now through circumfused light she looks,
On Nature's secret there, as her own books:

Speaks heaven's language, and discourseth free
To every order, every hierarchy !
Beholds her Maker, and in Him doth see
What the beginnings of all beauties be ;
And all beatitudes that thence do flow :
Which they that have the crown are sure to know !

Go now, her happy parents, and be sad,
If you not understand what child you had.
If you dare grudge at heaven, and repent
T'have paid again a blessing was but lent,
And trusted so, as it deposited lay
At pleasure, to be called for every day !
If you can envy your own daughter's bliss,
And wish her state less happy than it is ;
If you can cast about your either eye,
And see all dead here, or about to die !
The stars, that are the jewels of the night,
And day, deceasing, with the prince of light,
The sun, great kings, and mightiest kingdoms fall ;
Whole nations, nay, mankind ! the world, with all
That ever had beginning there, t'have end !
With what injustice should one soul pretend
T'escape this common known necessity ?
When we were all born, we began to die ;
And, but for that contention, and brave strife
The Christian hath t' enjoy the future life,
He were the wretched'st of the race of men :
But as he soars at that, he bruises then
The serpent's head ; gets above death and sin,
And, sure of heaven, rides triumphing in.

Ben Jonson,
1573 ?—1637.

EPITAPH ON MARCHIONESS OF
WINCHESTER

[*"Poems of Mr John Milton, both English and Latin, composed at several times, 1646."* Lady Winchester died April 15, 1631.]

This rich marble doth inter
The honoured wife of Winchester,
A Viscount's daughter, an Earl's heir,
Besides what her virtues fair
Added to her noble birth,
More than she could own from Earth.
Summers three times eight, save one,
She had told; alas! too soon,
After so short time of breath,
To house with darkness, and with death!
Yet had the number of her days
Been as complete as was her praise,
Nature and Fate had had no strife
In giving limit to her life.
Her high birth, and her graces sweet,
Quickly found a lover meet:
The virgin quire for her request
The god that sits at marriage feast;
He at their invoking came,
But with a scarce well-lighted flame;
And in his garland, as he stood,
Ye might discern a cypress bud.
Once had the early matrons run
To greet her of a lovely son,
And now with second hope she goes,
And calls Lucina to her throes;
But whether by mischance or blame,
Atropos for Lucina came;
And with remorseless cruelty
Spoiled at once both fruit and tree.
The hapless babe before his birth
Had burial, not yet laid in earth;

And the languished mother's womb
Was not long a living tomb.
So have I seen some tender slip,
Saved with care from winter's nip.
The pride of her carnation train,
Plucked up by some unheedy swain,
Who only thought to crop the flower
New shot up from vernal shower ;
But the fair blossom hangs the head
Side-ways, as on a dying bed,
And those pearls of dew she wears,
Prove to be presaging tears
Which the sad morn had let fall
On her hastening funeral.
Gentle Lady, may thy grave
Peace and quiet ever have !
After this thy travail sore,
Sweet rest seize thee evermore,
That to give the world increase,
Shortened hast thy own life's lease.
Here, besides the sorrowing
That thy noble house doth bring,
Here be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon ;
And some flowers, and some bays,
For thy hearse, to strew the ways,
Sent thee from the banks of Came,
Devoted to thy virtuous name ;
Whilst thou, bright Saint, high sitt'st in glory,
Next her, much like to thee in story,
That fair Syrian shepherdess,
Who, after years of barrenness,
The highly-favoured Joseph bore
To him that served for her before,
And at her next birth, much like thee,
Through pangs fled to felicity,
Far within the bosom bright
Of blazing Majesty and Light :

There with thee, new-welcome saint,
 Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
 With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
 No Marchioness, but now a Queen.

John Milton,
 1608—1674.



ON SHAKSPEARE, 1630

[First printed anonymously among the Commendatory verses prefixed to the Shakspeare Folio of 1632, where it is entitled "An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatick Poet, W. Shakspeare."]

What needs my Shakspeare for his honoured bones,
 The labour of an age in pilèd stones?
 Or that his hallowed relics should be hid
 Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
 Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
 What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
 Thou in our wonder and astonishment
 Hast built thyself a livelong monument.
 For whilst to the shame of slow-endeavouring art
 Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart
 Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book
 Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,
 Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
 Dost make us marble with too much conceiving,
 And so sepulchred in such pomp dost lie,
 That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

John Milton,
 1608—1674.

To the Memory of My Beloved
 MASTER WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE,
 And What He Hath Left us.

[From "*Underwoods: consisting of Divers Poems*," 1641, *part of the second folio edition.*]

To draw no envy, Shakspeare, on thy name,
 Am I thus ample to thy book and fame;
 While I confess thy writings to be such,
 As neither man, nor Muse, can praise too much.
 'Tis true, and all men's suffrage. But these ways
 Were not the paths I meant unto thy praise;
 For silliest ignorance on these may light,
 Which, when it sounds at best, but echoes right;
 Or blind affection, which doth ne'er advance
 The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance;
 Or crafty malice might pretend this praise,
 And think to ruin, where it seem'd to raise.
 These are, as some infâmous bawd, or whore,
 Should praise a matron; what could hurt her more?
 But thou art proof against them, and, indeed,
 Above the ill fortune of them, or the need.
 I therefore will begin: Soul of the age!
 The applause! delight! the wonder of our stage!
 My Shakspeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by
 Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
 A little farther off, to make thee room:
 Thou art a monument without a tomb,
 And art alive still, while thy book doth live
 And we have wits to read, and praise to give.
 That I not mix thee so, my brain excuses,
 I mean with great, but disproportioned, Muses:
 For if I thought my judgment were of years,
 I should commit thee surely with thy peers,
 And tell how far thou didst our Lily outshine,
 Or sporting Kyd, or Marlow's mighty line.

And though thou hadst small Latin, and less Greek,
 From thence to honour thee, I will not seek
 For names: but call forth thund'ring Eschylus,
 Euripides, and Sophocles to us,
 Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,
 To live again, to hear thy buskin tread,
 And shake a stage: or when thy socks were on,
 Leave thee alone for the comparison
 Of all, that insolent Greece, or haughty Rome
 Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.
 Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show,
 To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
 He was not of an age, but for all time!
 And all the Muses still were in their prime,
 When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
 Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm!
 Nature herself was proud of his designs,
 And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines!
 Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,
 As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit.
 The merry Greek, tart Aristophanes,
 Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not please;
 But antiquated and deserted lie,
 As they were not of nature's family.
 Yet must I not give nature all; thy art,
 My gentle Shakspeare, must enjoy a part.
 For though the poet's matter nature be,
 His art doth give the fashion; and, that he
 Who casts to write a living line, must sweat
 (Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
 Upon the Muses anvil; turn the same,
 And himself with it, that he thinks to frame;
 Or for the laurel, he may gain a scorn;
 For a good poet's made, as well as born.
 And such wert thou! Look how the father's face
 Lives in his issue, even so the race
 Of Shakspeare's mind and manners brightly shines
 In his well-turnèd and true-filèd lines:

In each of which he seems to shake a lance,
 As brandished at the eyes of ignorance.
 Sweet Swan of Avon! what a sight it were
 To see thee in our water yet appear,
 And make those flights upon the banks of Thames,
 That so did take Eliza, and our James!
 But stay, I see thee in the hemisphere
 Advanced, and made a constellation there!
 Shine forth, thou Star of poets, and with rage,
 Or influence, chide, or cheer the drooping stage,
 Which, since thy flight from hence, hath mourn'd like night,
 And despairs day, but for thy volume's light.

Ben Jonson,
 1573 (?)—1637.

AN EPITAPH ON BEN JONSON

[From "*Jonsonus Virbius: or the Memorie of Ben Johnson.*
Revived by the Friends of the Muses," 1638.]

The Muses fairest Light in no dark time,
 The Wonder of a Learned Age; the Line
 Which none can pass, the most proportioned Wit
 To Nature, the best Judge of what was fit:
 The deepest, plainest, highest, clearest Pen;
 The Voice most echoed by consenting Men;
 The Soul which answered best to all, well said
 By others, and which most requital made:
 Tuned to the highest Key of Ancient Rome,
 Returning all her Musick with his own:
 In whom with Nature, Study claimed a Part,
 Yet who unto himself owed all this Art:
 Here lies Ben Johnson; every Age will look
 With Sorrow here, with Wonder on his Book.

John Cleveland,
 1613—1658.

TO THE MEMORY OF MR OLDHAM

[Oldham died 9th December 1683, and this poem was printed, with other commendatory verses, in his "Remains" in verse and prose, which appeared in the following year.]

Farewell, too little and too lately known
 Whom I began to think, and call my own :
 For sure our souls were near allied, and thine
 Cast in the same poetic mould with mine.
 One common note on either lyre did strike,
 And knaves and fools we both abhorred alike ;
 To the same goal did both our studies drive ;
 The last set out, the soonest did arrive.
 Thus Nisus fell upon the slippery place,
 Whilst his young friend performed and won the race.
 O early ripe ! to thy abundant store
 What could advancing age have added more ?
 It might (what nature never gives the young)
 Have taught the numbers of thy native tongue.
 But satire needs not those, and wit will shine
 Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line.
 A noble error, and but seldom made,
 When poets are by too much force betrayed.
 Thy generous fruits, though gathered ere their prime,
 Still showed a quickness ; and maturing time
 But mellows what we write to the dull sweets of rhyme.
 Once more, hail, and farewell ! farewell, thou young
 But ah ! too short, Marcellus of our tongue !
 Thy brows with ivy and with laurels bound :
 But fate and gloomy night encompass thee around.

John Dryden,
 1631—1700.

ELEGY ON SHAKSPEARE

(From *Lansdowne MS.* Temp. James I.)

[*This Elegy was first printed in the first edition of Donne's collected poems, 1633. It was omitted in the later edition of 1635, and appears with the subscription W. B. in the edition of Shakspeare's poems of 1640; so writes Mr R. Warwick Bond, in his "Poetical Works of William Basse," 1893. Basse's claim to the authorship rests on the fact that his name is attached to the lines in the Lansdowne and other MSS.*]

Renowned Spenser lie a thought more nigh
 To learned Chaucer, and rare Beaumont lie
 A little nearer Spenser, to make room
 For Shakespeare in your threefold, fourfold tomb.
 To lodge all four in one bed make a shift
 Until Doomsday, for hardly will a fift*
 Betwixt this day and that by Fate be slain,
 For whom your curtains may be drawn again.
 If your precedency in death doth bar
 A fourth place in your sacred sepulchre,
 Under this carvèd marble of thine own,
 Sleep, rare Tragedian, Shakespeare, sleep alone:
 Thy unmolested peace, unsharèd cave
 Possess as lord, not tenant, of thy grave,
 That unto us and others it may be
 Honour hereafter to be laid by thee.

William Basse,
 1602—1653.

* fifth.

SHAKSPEARE

[*The seventy-first Sonnet. First printed in "Shakspeare's Sonnets. Never before Imprinted. At London by G. Eld for T. T., and are to be solde by William Apsley, 1609."*]

No longer mourn for me when I am dead,
 Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
 Give warning to the world that I am fled
 From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
 Nay, if you read this line, remember not
 The hand that writ it; for I love you so
 That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot
 If thinking on me then should make you woe.
 O, if, I say, you look upon this verse
 When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
 Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
 But let your love even with my life decay,
 Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
 And mock you with me after I am gone.

William Shakspeare,
 1564—1616.



RALEIGH

[*Printed with Raleigh's "Prerogative of Parliaments," 1628: and in his "Remains," 1661, with the title "Found in his Bible in the Gate House at Westminster." The lines are also found as the last stanza of a poem which Mr Bullen has reprinted in his Speculum Amantis from Hart. MS. 6917, fol. 48. The stanza there begins "Oh, cruel Time," and the last two lines are omitted.*]

Even such is time that takes in trust,
 Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
 And pays us but with earth and dust;
 Who in the dark and silent grave,

When we have wandered all our ways,
 Shuts up the story of our days :
 But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
 My God shall raise me up, I trust.

Sir Walter Raleigh,
 1552—1618.

LAMENT FOR THE MAKARIS *

When he was sick

*[Printed by Chepman and Myllar, the earliest Scotch printers,
 in 1508.]*

I that in heill wes, and glaidness,
 Am trublit now with gret seikness,
 And feblit with infirmitie ;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Our plesance heir is all vane glory,
 This fals warld is bot transitory,
 The flesche is brukle, the Feynd is slé ;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

The stait of Man dois change and vary,
 Now sound, now seik, now blyth, now sary,
 Now dansand mirry, now like to die ;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

No Stait in Erd heir standis sicker ;
 As with the wynd wavis the wickir,
 So wannis this Warldis vanité ;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Unto the Deid gois all Estaitis,
 Princis, Prellattis, and Potestaitis,
 Baith riche, and puire of all degré ;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

* Poets. I have thought it undesirable to make any attempt to modernise the spelling of this poem, the earliest included in the section.

He takis the Knychtis in to feild,
 Anarmit under helme and scheild;
 Victour he is at all mellie;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

That strong unmercifull tyrand
 Takis on the Mutheris breist sowkand
 The Bab, full of benignité;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He takis the Campioun in the stour,*
 The Capitane closit in the tour,
 The Lady in bour full of bewtie;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He spairis no Lord for his piscence,†
 Nor Clerk for his intelligence:
 His awfull straik may no man flé;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Art Magicianis, and Astrologgis,
 Rethoris, Logicianis, Theologgis,
 Thame helpis no conclusionis slé;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

In Medicyne the most Practicianis,
 Leichis, Surrigianis, and Phisicianis,
 Thame self fra Deth may nocht supplé;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

I see that Makaris among the laif
 Playis heir thair padyanis,‡ syne gois to graif;
 Spairit is nocht thair faculté;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He hes done peteouslie devour,
 The noble Chawcer of Makaris flour,
 The Monk of Bery, and Gower all thré;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

* tumult.

† puissance.

‡ pageants.

The gude Schir Hew of Eglintoun,
Etrik, Heryot, and Wyntoun,
He hes tane out of this Cuntré;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

That Scorpioun fell hes done infek
Maister Johne Clerk, and James Afflek,
Fra ballot making and tragedé;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Holland and Barbour he has berevit;
Allace! that he nocht with us levit
Schir Mungo Lokert of the Lé;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Clerk of Tranent eik he hes tane,
That maid the awnteris of Gawane:
Schir Gilbert Hay endit hes he:
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He hes Blind Hary, and Sandy Traill
Slaine with his schot of mortall haill,
Quhilk Patrik Johnestoun nicht nocht flé;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He hes reft Merseir his endyte,
That did in luve so lifly write,
So schort, so quyk, of sentence hie;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He has tane Roull of Abirdene,
And gentill Roull of Corstorphine:
Two better fallowis did no man sé;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

In Dunfermelyne he hes tane Broun,
With Maister Robert Henrisoun:
Schir Johne the Ross embraist hes hé;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

And he hes now tane, last of aw,
 Gud gentill Stobo, and Quintyne Schaw,
 Of quhome all wichtis hes petie :
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Gud Maister Walter Kennedy,
 In poynt of dede lyis veraly,
 Gret reuth it wer that so suld be ;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Sen he hes all my Brether tane,
 He will nocht lat me leif alane,
 On forse I mon his nyxt pray be ;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Sen for the Deid remeid is non,
 Best is that we for deid dispone,
 Eftir our deid that leif may we.
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

William Dunbar,
 1465?—1530?



TO SIR WILLIAM ALEXANDER

[*"Flowers of Sion. By William Drummond, of Hawthorne-
 Denne."* 1623.]

Though I have twice been at the doors of death,
 And twice found shut those gates which ever mourn,
 This but a lightning is, truce ta'en to breath,
 For lateborn sorrows augur fleet return.
 Amidst thy sacred cares and courtly toils,
 Alexis, when thou shalt hear wandering Fame
 Tell, Death hath triumphed o'er my mortal spoils,
 And that on earth I am but a sad name ;

If thou e'er held me dear, by all our love,
 By all that bliss, those joys Heaven here us gave,
 I conjure thee, and by the maids of Jove,
 To grave this short remembrance on my grave:
 Here Damon lies, whose songs did sometime grace
 The murmuring Esk: may roses shade the place!

William Drummond,
 1585—1649.

CHARGE TO JULIA AT HIS DEATH

[From "*Hesperides, or The Works both Humane and Divine of Robert Herrick, Esq.*," 1648.]

Dearest of thousands, now the time draws near
 That with my lines my life must full-stop here.
 Cut off thy hairs, and let thy tears be shed
 Over my turf, when I am buried.
 Then for effusions,* let none wanting be,
 Or other rites that do belong to me;
 As love shall help thee, when thou dost go hence
 Unto thy everlasting residence.

Robert Herrick,
 1591—1674.

ELEGY

On a Lady, whom Grief for the Death of her
 Betrothed Killed.

[*Poems*, 1873.]

Assemble, all ye maidens, at the door,
 And all ye loves, assemble; far and wide
 Proclaim the bridal, that proclaimed before
 Has been deferred to this late eventide:

For on this night the bride,
 The days of her betrothal over,
 Leaves the parental hearth for evermore;
 To-night the bride goes forth to meet her lover.

* Outpourings or libations.

Reach down the wedding vesture, that has lain
Yet all unvisited, the silken gown :
Bring out the bracelets, and the golden chain
Her dearer friends provided : sere and brown
 Bring out the festal crown,
 And set it on her forehead lightly
 Though it be withered, twine no wreath again ;
This only is the crown she can wear rightly.

Cloke her in ermine, for the night is cold,
And wrap her warmly, for the night is long,
In pious hands the flaming torches hold,
While her attendants, chosen from among
 Her faithful virgin throng,
 May lay her in her cedar litter,
 Decking her coverlet with sprigs of gold,
Roses, and lilies white that best befit her.

Sound flute and tabor, that the bridal be
Not without music, nor with these alone ;
But let the viol lead the melody,
With lesser intervals, and plaintive moan
 Of sinking semitone ;
 And all in choir, the virgin voices
 Rest not from singing in skilled harmony
The song that aye the bridegroom's ear rejoices.

Let the priests go before, arrayed in white,
And let the dark stoled minstrels follow slow,
Next they that bear her, honoured on this night,
And then the maidens, in a double row,
 Each singing soft and low,
 And each on high a torch upstaying :
 Unto her lover lead her forth with light,
With music, and with singing, and with praying.

'Twas at this sheltering hour he nightly came,
And found her trusty window open wide,
And knew the signal of the timorous flame,
That long the restless curtain would not hide

Her form that stood beside ;
As scarce she dared to be delighted,
Listening to that sweet tale, that is no shame
To faithful lovers, that their hearts have plighted.

But now for many days the dewy grass
Has shown no markings of his feet at morn :
And watching she has seen no shadow pass
The moonlit walk, and heard no music borne
Upon her ear forlorn.

In vain has she looked out to greet him ;
He has not come, he will not come, alas !
So let us bear her out where she must meet him.

Now to the river bank the priests are come :
The bark is ready to receive its freight :
Let some prepare her place therein, and some
Embark the litter with its slender weight :

The rest stand by in state,
And sing her a safe passage over ;
While she is oared across to her new home,
Into the arms of her expectant lover.

And thou, O lover, that art on the watch,
Where, on the banks of the forgetful streams,
The pale indifferent ghosts wander, and snatch
The sweeter moments of their broken dreams,—

Thou, when the torchlight gleams,
When thou shalt see the slow procession,
And when thine ears the fitful music catch,
Rejoice ! for thou art near to thy possession.

Robert Bridges.

TO BIANCA

[*Hesperides, or The Works Both Humane and Divine of Robert Herrick, Esq.*, 1648.]

Ah, Bianca! now I see,
 It is noon and past with me :
 In a while it will strike one ;
 Then, Bianca, I am gone.
 Some effusions* let me have,
 Offered on my holy grave ;
 Then, Bianca, let me rest
 With my face towards the East.

Robert Herrick,
 1591—1674.



FATE! I HAVE ASKED

[*The Works of Walter Savage Landor*, 1846.]

Fate! I have asked few things of thee
 And fewer have to ask.
 Shortly, thou knowest, I shall be
 No more : then con thy task.

If one be left on earth so late
 Whose love is like the past,
 Tell her in whispers, gentle Fate!
 Not even love must last.

Tell her I leave the noisy feast
 Of life, a little tired,
 Amid its pleasures few possessed
 And many undesired.

Tell her with steady pace to come
 And, where my laurels lie,
 To throw the freshest on the tomb,
 When it has caught her sigh.

* Outpourings or libations.

Tell her to stand some steps apart
From others on that day,
And check the tear (if tear should start)
Too precious for dull clay.

Walter Savage Landor,
1775—1864.



DEATH STANDS ABOVE ME

[From "*The Last Fruit of an old Tree*, by Walter Savage Landor, 1853."]

Death stands above me, whispering low
I know not what into my ear;
Of his strange language all I know
Is, there is not a word of fear.

Walter Savage Landor,
1775—1864.



ON SOUTHEY'S DEATH

[*"Dry sticks fagoted by Walter Savage Landor,"* 1858.
Southey died in 1843.]

Friends! hear the words my wandering thoughts would
say,
And cast them into shape some other day.
Southey, my friend of forty years, is gone,
And, shattered by the fall, I stand alone.

Walter Savage Landor,
1775—1864.

TO THE SISTER OF ELIA

[First printed in "*Able's Literary Hours*," 1837. Reprinted
in the "*Works of Walter Savage Landor*," 1846. Charles
Lamb died in 1834.]

Comfort thee, O thou mourner, yet awhile!
Again shall Elia's smile
Refresh thy heart, where heart can ache no more
What is it we deplore?

He leaves behind him, freed from griefs and years,
Far worthier things than tears,
The love of friends without a single foe:
Unequalled lot below!

His gentle soul, his genius, these are thine;
For these dost thou repine?
He may have left the lowly walks of men;
Left them he has; what then?

Are not his footsteps followed by the eyes
Of all the good and wise?
Tho' the warm day is over, yet they seek
Upon the lofty peak

Of his pure mind the roseate light that glows
O'er death's perennial snows.
Behold him! from the region of the blest
He speaks: he bids thee rest.

Walter Savage Landor,
1775—1864.

IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

[From "*Poems and Ballads*," vol. i.]

Back to the flower-town, side by side,
The bright months bring,
New-born, the bridegroom and the bride,
Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,
Filled full of sun ;
All things come back to her, being free ;
All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot
Flowers that were dead
Live, and old suns revive ; but not
That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea,
Far north I hear
One face shall never turn to me
As once this year :

Shall never smile and turn and rest
On mine as there,
Nor one most sacred hand be prest
Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half linger,
Half run before ;
The youngest to the oldest singer
That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find
Till all grief end,
In holiest age our mightiest mind,
Father and friend.

But thou, if anything endure,
If hope there be,
O spirit that man's life left pure,
Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were
Look earthward now ;
Let dreams revive the reverend hair,
The imperial brow ;

Come back in sleep, for in the life
Where thou art not
We find none like thee. Time and strife
And the world's lot

Move thee no more ; but love at least
And reverent heart
May move thee, royal and released,
Soul, as thou art.

And thou, his Florence, to thy trust
Receive and keep,
Keep safe his dedicated dust,
His sacred sleep.

So shall thy lovers, come from far,
Mix with thy name
As morning-star with evening-star
His faultless fame.

Algernon Charles Swinburne.

ON THE DEATH OF THOMSON

[“ *An Ode occasioned by the death of Mr Thomson.*
Lond. 1749.”]

“The scene of the following stanzas is supposed to lie on the Thames, near Richmond.”—*Original Advertisement by Collins.*

In yonder grave a druid lies,
Where slowly winds the stealing wave ;
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise
To deck its poet's sylvan grave.

In yon deep bed of whispering reeds
His airy harp * shall now be laid,
That he, whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
May love through life the soothing shade.

Then maids and youths shall linger here,
And while its sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem in pity's ear
To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
When Thames in summer wreaths is drest,
And oft suspend the dashing oar,
To bid his gentle spirit rest !

And oft, as ease and health retire
To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
The friend shall view yon whitening spire,†
And 'mid the varied landscape weep.

But thou, who own'st that earthy bed,
Ah ! what will every dirge avail ;
Or tears, which love and pity shed
That mourn beneath that gliding sail ?

* The harp of Aeolus, described in Thomson's “Castle of Indolence.”

† Richmond Church, where Thomson is buried.

Yet lives there one whose heedless eye
 Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimmering near?
 With him, sweet bard, may fancy die,
 And joy desert the blooming year.

But thou, lorn stream, whose sullen tide
 No sedge-crowned sisters now attend,
 Now waft me from the green hill's side,
 Whose cold turf hides the buried friend!

And see—the fairy valleys fade;
 Dun night has veiled the solemn view!
 Yet once again, dear parted shade,
 Meek nature's child, again adieu!

The genial meads, assigned to bless
 Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom;
 Their hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress
 With simple hands, thy rural tomb.

Long, long, thy stone and pointed clay
 Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes;
 O vales and wild woods! shall he say,
 In yonder grave your druid lies.

William Collins,
 1721—1759.



REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS

(Composed upon the Thames near Richmond)

[*Lyrical Ballads, with a few other Poems. Joseph Cottle,*
Bristol, 1798.]

Glide gently, thus for ever glide,
 O Thames! that other bards may see
 As lovely visions by thy side
 As now, fair river! come to me.

O glide, fair stream! for ever so,
 Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,
 Till all our minds for ever flow,
 As thy deep waters now are flowing.

Vain thought!—yet be as now thou art,
 That in thy waters may be seen
 The image of a poet's heart,
 How bright, how solemn, how serene:
 Such as did once the Poet bless,
 Who murmuring here a later ditty,*
 Could find no refuge from distress,
 But in the milder grief of pity.

Now let us, as we float along,
 For *him* suspend the dashing oar;
 And pray that never child of song,
 May know that Poet's sorrows more.
 How calm! how still! the only sound,
 The dripping of the oar suspended!
 —The evening darkness gathers round,
 By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

William Wordsworth,
 1770—1850.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS

[*The Poems of William Wordsworth, D.C.L., Poet-Laureate,*
etc., 1845.]

I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold,
 At thought of what I now behold:
 As vapours breathed from dungeons cold
 Strike pleasure dead,
 So sadness comes from out the mould
 Where Burns is laid.

* The ode on the death of Thomson, the last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his lifetime.—*Wordsworth's note.*

And have I then thy bones so near,
 And thou forbidden to appear?
 As if it were thyself that's here

I shrink with pain;

And both my wishes and my fear

Alike are vain.

Off weight—nor press on weight!—away
 Dark thoughts!—they came, but not to stay;
 With chastened feelings would I pay

The tribute due

To him, and aught that hides his clay

From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
 He sang, his genius "glinted" forth,
 Rose like a star that touching earth,

For so it seems,

Doth glorify its humble birth

With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
 The struggling heart, where be they now?—
 Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,

The prompt, the brave,

Slept, with the obscurest, in the low

And silent grave.

I mourned with thousands, but as one
 More deeply grieved, for He was gone,
 Whose light I hailed when first it shone,

And showed my youth

How Verse may build a princely throne

On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
 Regret pursues, and with it blends,—
 Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends

By Skiddaw seen,—

Neighbours we were, and loving friends

We might have been;

True friends though diversely inclined ;—
But heart with heart and mind with mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined,
 Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
 More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow ;
Thou "poor Inhabitant below,"
At this dread moment—even so—
 Might we together
Have sate and talked where gowans blow,
 Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
Within my reach ; of knowledge graced
By fancy, what a rich repast !
 But why go on?—
Oh ! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
 His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
(Not three weeks past the stripling died)
Lies gathered to his Father's side,
 Soul-moving sight !
Yet one to which is not denied
 Some sad delight.

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
Hath early found among the dead,
Harboured where none can be misled,
 Wronged or distrest ;
And surely here it may be said
 That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
Checked oft-times in a devious race,
May He who halloweth the place
 Where Man is laid
Receive thy spirit in the embrace
 For which it prayed !

Sighing I turned away ; but ere
 Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,
 Music that sorrow comes not near,
 A ritual hymn,
 Chanted in love that casts out fear
 By Seraphim.

William Wordsworth,
 1770—1850.



THOUGHTS

Suggested the day following, on the banks of Nith,
 near the poet's residence

*[The Poems of William Wordsworth, D.C.L.,
 Poet-Laureate, etc., 1845.]*

Too frail to keep the lofty vow
 That must have followed when his brow
 Was wreathed—"The Vision" tells us how—
 With holly spray,
 He faltered, drifted to and fro,
 And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister, throng
 Our minds when, lingering all too long,
 Over the grave of Burns we hung
 In social grief—
 Indulged as if it were a wrong
 To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme
 Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,
 And prompt to welcome every gleam
 Of good and fair,
 Let us beside this limpid Stream
 Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight ;
Think rather of those moments bright
When to the consciousness of right

His course was true,
When Wisdom prospered in his sight,
And virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,
Freely as in youth's season bland,
When side by side, his Book in hand,
We wont to stray,
Our pleasure varying at command
Of each sweet Lay.

How oft inspired must he have trod
These pathways, yon far-stretching road !
There lurks his home ; in that Abode,
With mirth elate,
Or in his nobly-pensive mood,
The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image overawes,
Before it humbly let us pause,
And ask of Nature, from what cause,
And by what rules
She trained her Burns to win applause
That shames the Schools.

Through busiest street and loneliest glen
Are felt the flashes of his pen ;
He rules 'mid winter snows, and when
Bees fill their hives ;
Deep in the general heart of men
His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime
Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime,
And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
From genuine springs,
Shall dwell together till old Time
Folds up his wings ?

Sweet Mercy! to the gates of Heaven
 This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven;
 The rueful conflict, the heart riven
 With vain endeavour,
 And memory of Earth's bitter leaven,
 Effaced for ever.

But why to Him confine the prayer,
 When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear
 On the frail heart the purest share
 With all that live?—
 The best of what we do and are,
 Just God, forgive!

William Wordsworth,
 1770—1850.

ON SEEING A WOUNDED HARE LIMP BY ME WHICH A FELLOW HAD JUST SHOT AT

[From "*Poems chiefly in the Scottish Dialect.* By Robert Burns. In two volumes. Edinburgh, 1793."]]

Inhuman man! curse on thy barb'rous art,
 And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye!
 May never pity soothe thee with a sigh,
 Nor ever pleasure glad thy cruel heart!

Go, live, poor wanderer of the wood and field,
 The bitter little that of life remains:
 No more the thickening brakes and verdant plains
 To thee shall home, or food, or pastime yield.

Seek, mangled wretch, some place of wonted rest,
 No more of rest, but now thy dying bed!
 The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
 The cold earth with thy bloody bosom prest.

Oft as by winding Nith, I, musing, wait
 The sober eve, or hail the cheerful dawn,
 I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
 And curse the ruffian's aim, and mourn thy hapless fate.

Robert Burns,
 1759—1796.



A BARD'S EPITAPH

[From "*Poems chiefly in the Scottish Dialect.* By Robert Burns. *Kilmarnock*, 1786."]

Is there a whim-inspired fool,
 Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
 Owre blate to seek, owre proud to snool,
 Let him draw near;
 And owre this grassy heap sing dool,
 And drap a tear.

Is there a Bard of rustic song,
 Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,
 That weekly this area throng,
 O, pass not by!
 But, with a frater-feeling strong,
 Here, heave a sigh.

Is there a man, whose judgment clear,
 Can others teach the course to steer,
 Yet runs, himself, life's mad career,
 Wild as the wave;
 Here pause—and, thro' the starting tear,
 Survey this grave.

The poor Inhabitant below
 Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
 And keenly felt the friendly glow,
 And softer flame;
 But thoughtless follies laid him low,
 And stain'd his name!

Reader, attend—whether thy soul
 Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
 Or darkling grubs this earthly hole,
 In low pursuit ;
 Know, prudent, cautious, *self-control*,
 Is wisdom's root.

Robert Burns,
 1759—1796.



MONODY ON THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON

[*The Poetical Works of S. T. Coleridge.*
In three volumes, 1829.]

O what a wonder seems the fear of death,
 Seeing how gladly we all sink to sleep,
 Babes, Children, Youths, and Men,
 Night following night for threescore years and ten !
 But doubly strange, where life is but a breath
 To sigh and pant with, up Want's rugged steep.

Away, Grim Phantom ! Scorpion king, away !
 Reserve thy terrors, and thy stings display
 For coward Wealth and Guilt in robes of State !
 Lo ! by the grave I stand of one for whom
 A prodigal Nature and a niggard Doom
 (That all bestowing, this withholding all)
 Made each chance knell from distant spire or dome
 Sound like a seeking Mother's anxious call,
 Return, poor Child ! Home, weary Truant, home !

Thee, Chatterton ! these unblest stones protect
 From want, and the bleak freezings of neglect.
 Too long before the vexing Storm-blast driven
 Here hast thou found repose ! beneath this sod !
 Thou ! O vain word ! thou dwell'st not with the clod !
 Amid the shining Host of the Forgiven
 Thou at the throne of mercy, and thy GOD
 The triumph of redeeming Love dost Hymn
 (Believe it, O my Soul !) to harps of Seraphim.

Yet oft, perforce ('tis suffering Nature's call),
I weep that heaven-born Genius so should fall ;
And oft, in Fancy's saddest hour, my soul,
Averted shudders at the poisoned bowl.
Now groans my sickening heart, as still I view
 Thy corse of livid hue ;
Now indignation checks the feeble sigh,
Or flashes through the tear that glistens in mine eye !

Is this the land of song-ennobled line ?
Is this the land, where Genius ne'er in vain
 Poured forth his lofty strain ?
Ah me ! yet Spenser, gentlest bard divine,
Beneath chill Disappointment's shade,
His weary limbs in lonely anguish laid ;
 And o'er her darling dead
 Pity, hopeless, hung her head,
While "'mid the pelting of that merciless storm,"
Sunk to the cold earth Otway's famished form !

Sublime of thought, and confident of fame,
From vales where Avon winds the Minstrel came.
Light-hearted youth ! aye, as he hastes along,
 He meditates the future song,
How dauntless Ælla frayed the Dacyan foe ;
 And while the numbers, flowing strong,
 In eddies whirl, in surges throng,
Exulting in the spirits' genial throe
In tides of power his life-blood seems to flow.

And now his cheeks with deeper ardours flame,
His eyes have glorious meanings, that declare
More than the light of outward day shines there,
A holier triumph and a sterner aim !
Wings grow within him ; and he soars above
Or Bard's or Minstrel's lay of war or love.
Friend to the friendless, to the sufferer health,
He hears the widow's prayer, the good man's praise ;

To scenes of bliss transmutes his fancied wealth,
And young and old shall now see happy days.
On many a waste he bids trim gardens rise,
Gives the blue sky to many a prisoner's eyes;
And now in wrath he grasps the patriot steel,
And her own iron rod he makes Oppression feel.

Sweet Flower of Hope! free Nature's genial child!
That didst so fair disclose thy early bloom,
Filling the wide air with a rich perfume!
For thee in vain all heavenly aspects smiled
From the hard world brief respite could they win,—
The frost nipped sharp without, the canker preyed
within!

Ah! where are fled the charms of vernal Grace,
And Joy's wild gleams that lightened o'er thy face?
Youth of tumultuous soul, and haggard eye!
Thy wasted form, thy hurried steps I view,
On thy wan forehead starts the lethal dew,
And oh! the anguish of that shuddering sigh!

Such were the struggles of the gloomy hour,
When Care, of withered brow,
Prepared the poison's death-cold power:
Already to thy lips was raised the bowl,
When near thee stood Affection meek
(Her bosom bare, and wildly pale her cheek),
Thy sullen gaze she bade thee roll
On scenes that well might melt thy soul;
Thy native cot she flashed upon thy view,
Thy native cot, where still, at close of day,
Peace smiling sate, and listened to thy lay;
Thy sister's shrieks she bade thee hear,
And mark thy mother's thrilling tear;
See, see her breast's convulsive throe,
Her silent agony of woe!
Ah! dash the poisoned chalice from thy hand!

And thou hadst dashed it at her soft command,
But that Despair and Indignation rose,
And told again the story of thy woes ;
Told the keen insult of the unfeeling heart,
The dread dependence on the low-born mind ;
Told every pang with which thy soul must smart ;
Neglect, and grinning Scorn, and Want combined !
Recoiling quick, thou bad'st the friend of pain
Roll the black tide of Death through every freezing vein !

O Spirit blest !

Whether the Eternal's throne around,
Amidst the blaze of Seraphim,
Thou pourest forth the grateful hymn ;
Or soaring thro' the blest domain
Enrapturest Angels with thy strain,—
Grant me, like thee, the lyre to sound ;
Like thee with fire divine to glow ;—
But ah ! when rage the waves of woe,
Grant me with firmer breast to meet their hate,
And soar beyond the storm with upright eye elate !

Ye woods ! that wave o'er Avon's rocky steep,
To Fancy's ear sweet is your murmuring deep !
For here she loves the cypress wreath to weave ;
Watching, with wistful eye, the saddening tints of eve.
Here, far from men, amid this pathless grove,
In solemn thought the Minstrel wont to rove,
Like star-beam on the slow sequestered tide
Lone-glittering, through the high tree branching wide.
And here, in Inspiration's eager hour,
When most the big soul feels the mastering power,
 These wilds, these caverns roaming o'er,
 Round which the screaming sea-gulls soar
With wild unequal steps he passed along,
Oft pouring on the winds a broken song :
Anon, upon some rough rock's fearful brow
Would pause abrupt—and gaze upon the waves below.

Poor Chatterton ! he sorrows for thy fate
Who would have praised and loved thee, ere too late.
Poor Chatterton ! farewell ! of darkest hues
This chaplet cast I on thy unshaped tomb ;
But dare no longer on the sad theme muse,
Lest kindred woes persuade a kindred doom :
For oh ! big gall-drops, shook from Folly's wing,
Have blackened the fair promise of my spring ;
And the stern Fate transpierced with viewless dart
The last pale Hope that shivered at my heart !

Hence, gloomy thoughts ! no more my soul shall dwell
On joys that were ! No more endure to weigh
The shame and anguish of the evil day,
Wisely forgetful ! O'er the ocean swell
Sublime of Hope I seek the cottaged dell
Where Virtue calm with careless step may stray ;
And, dancing to the moon-light roundelay,
The wizard Passions weave a holy spell !

O Chatterton ! that thou wert yet alive !
Sure thou would'st spread the canvas to the gale,
And love with us the tinkling team to drive
O'er peaceful Freedom's undivided dale ;
And we, at sober eve, would round thee throng,
Hanging, enraptured, on thy stately song,
And greet with smiles the young-eyed Poesy
All deftly masked as hoar Antiquity.

Alas, vain Phantasies ! the fleeting brood
Of Woe self-solaced in her dreamy mood !
Yet will I love to follow the sweet dream,
Where Susquehana pours his untamed stream ;
And on some hill, whose forest-frowning side
Waves o'er the murmurs of his calmer tide,
Will raise a solemn Cenotaph to thee,
Sweet Harper of time-shrouded Minstrelsy !
And there, soothed sadly by the dirgeful wind,
Muse on the sore ills I had left behind.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge,
1772—1834.

COWPER'S GRAVE

[From "*The Seraphim and other Poems. By Elizabeth B. Barrett. London, 1838.*"]

I

It is a place where poets crowned may feel the heart's
decaying ;
It is a place where happy saints may weep amid their
praying ;
Yet let the grief and humbleness as low as silence
languish :
Earth surely now may give her calm to whom she gave
her anguish.

II

O poets, from a maniac's tongue was poured the death-
less singing !
O Christians, at your cross of hope a hopeless hand was
clinging !
O men, this man in brotherhood your weary paths
beguiling,
Groaned inly while he taught you peace, and died while
ye were smiling !

III

And now, what time ye all may read through dimming
tears his story,
How discord on the music fell and darkness on the
glory,
And how when, one by one, sweet sounds and wander-
ing lights departed,
He wore no less a loving face because so broken-
hearted.

IV

He shall be strong to sanctify the poet's high vocation,
And bow the meekest Christian down in meeker
adoration ;

Nor ever shall he be, in praise, by wise or good forsaken,
Named softly as the household name of one whom God
hath taken.

V

With quiet sadness and no gloom I learn to think upon
him,
With meekness that is gratefulness to God whose heaven
hath won him,
Who suffered once the madness-cloud to His own love
to blind him,
But gently led the blind along where breath and bird
could find him ;

VI

And wrought within his shattered brain such quick poetic
senses
As hills have language for, and stars harmonious in-
fluences :
The pulse of dew upon the grass kept his within its
number,
And silent shadows from the trees refreshed him like a
slumber.

VII

Wild timid hares were drawn from woods to share his
home-caresses,
Uplooking to his human eyes with sylvan tendernesses :
The very world, by God's constraint, from falsehood's
ways removing,
Its women and its men became, beside him, true and
loving.

VIII

And though, in blindness, he remained unconscious of
that guiding,

And things provided came without the sweet sense of
providing,
He testified this solemn truth, while phrenzy desolated,
—Nor man nor nature satisfies whom only God created.

IX

Like a sick child that knoweth not his mother while she
blesses,
And drops upon his burning brow the coolness of her
kisses,—
That turns his fevered eyes around—“My mother!
where’s my mother?”—
As if such tender words and deeds could come from any
other!—

X

The fever gone, with leaps of heart he sees her bending
o’er him,
Her face all pale from watchful love, the unweary love
she bore him!
Thus woke the poet from the dream his life’s long fever
gave him,
Beneath those deep pathetic Eyes which closed in death
to save him.

XI

Thus? oh, not *thus!* no type of earth can image that
awaking,
Wherein he scarcely heard the chant of seraphs, round
him breaking,
Or felt the new immortal throb of soul from body parted,
But felt these eyes alone, and knew—“My Saviour! *not*
deserted!”

XII

Deserted! Who hath dreamt that when the cross in
darkness rested,
Upon the Victim’s hidden face no love was manifested?

What frantic hands outstretched have e'er the atoning
drops averted?

What tears have washed them from the soul, that *one*
should be deserted?

XIII

Deserted! God could separate from His own essence
rather ;

And Adam's sins *have* swept between the righteous Son
and Father :

Yea, once Immanuel's orphaned cry His universe hath
shaken—

It went up single, echoless, "My God, I am forsaken!"

XIV

It went up from the Holy's lips amid His lost creation,
That, of the lost, no son should use those words of
desolation!

That earth's worst phrenzies, marring hope, should mar
not hope's fruition,

And I, on Cowper's grave, should see his rapture in a
vision.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning,
1806—1861.



ON THE DEATH OF MR CRASHAW

[*First printed in the folio "Poems" of 1656.*]

Poet and Saint! to thee alone are given
The two most sacred names of Earth and Heaven,
The hard and rarest union which can be,
Next that of Godhead with Humanity.
Long did the Muses banish'd slaves abide,
And built vain pyramids to mortal pride;
Like Moses thou (though spells and charms withstand)
Hast brought them nobly home back to their Holy Land.

Ah wretched we, poets of earth ! but thou
Wert living the same poet which thou'rt now ;
Whilst angels sing to thee their airs divine,
And joy in an applause so great as thine ;
Equal society with them to hold,
Thou need'st not make new songs, but say the old ;
And they (kind spirits !) shall all rejoice to see
How little less than they exalted man may be.

Still the old Heathen gods in Numbers dwell ;
The heavenliest thing on earth still keeps up hell !
Nor have we yet quite purged the Christian land ;
Still idols here, like calves at Bethel, stand.
And, though Pan's death long since all oracles breaks,
Yet still in rhyme the fiend Apollo speaks :
Nay, with the worst of heathen dotage, we
(Vain men !) the monster Woman deify ;
Find stars, and tie our fates there in a face,
And paradise in them, by whom we lost it, place.
What different faults corrupt our Muses thus ?
Wanton as girls, as old wives fabulous !

Thy spotless Muse, like Mary, did contain
The boundless Godhead ; she did well disdain
That her eternal verse employed should be
On a less subject than eternity ;
And for a sacred mistress scorned to take,
But her whom God himself scorned not his spouse to make.
It (in a kind) her miracle did do ;
A fruitful mother was, and virgin too.

How well (blest swan !) did Fate contrive thy death,
And made thee render up thy tuneful breath
In thy great mistress' arms, thou most divine
And richest offering of Loretto's shrine !
Where, like some holy sacrifice t' expire,
A fever burns thee, and Love lights the fire.
Angels (they say) brought the famed chapel there,
And bore the sacred load in triumph through the air :
'Tis surer much they brought thee there, and they,
And thou, their charge, went singing all the way.

Pardon, my Mother-church ! if I consent
That angels led him when from thee he went ;
For ev'n in error sure no danger is,
When joined with so much piety as his.
Ah, mighty God ! with shame I speak't, and grief,
Ah, that our greatest faults were in belief !
And our weak reason were ev'n weaker yet,
Rather than thus our wills too strong for it !
His faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets might
Be wrong ; his life, I'm sure, was in the right ;
And I myself a Catholic will be,
So far at least, great Saint ! to pray to thee.
Hail, bard triumphant ! and some care bestow
On us, the poets militant below !
Opposed by our old enemy, adverse Chance,
Attacked by Envy and by Ignorance ;
Enchained by Beauty, tortured by Desires,
Exposed by Tyrant-Love to savage beasts and fires.
Thou from low earth in nobler flames didst rise,
And, like Elijah, mount alive the skies.
Elisha-like (but with a wish much less,
More fit thy greatness and my littleness)
Lo ! here I beg (I, whom thou once didst prove
So humble to esteem, so good to love)
Not that thy spirit might on me doubled be,
I ask but *half* thy mighty spirit for me :
And, when my Muse soars with so strong a wing,
'Twill learn of things divine, and first of thee, to sing.

Abraham Cowley,
1618—1667.

TO SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S SOUL

Sonnet prefixed to Sidney's Apology for Poetry

[First printed in "*An Apologie for Poetrie. Written by the right noble, vertuous, and learned Sir Phillip Sidney, Knight. Odi profanum vulgus et arceo. At London Printed for Henry Olney,*" etc., 1595.]

Give pardon, blessed soule ! to my bold cries,
 If they, importune, interrupt thy song,
 Which now with joyful notes thou singst among
 The angel-quiristers of the heavenly skies.
 Give pardon eke, sweet soul ! to my slow cries,
 That since I saw thee now it is so long ;
 And yet the tears that unto thee belong,
 To thee as yet they did not sacrifice ;
 I did not know that thou wert dead before,
 I did not feel the grief I did sustain ;
 The greater stroke astonisheth the more,
 Astonishment takes from us sense of pain :
 I stood amazed when others tears begun
 And now begin to weep when they have done.

Henry Constable,
 1555—1615.

AN ELEGY, OR FRIEND'S PASSION FOR HIS
ASTROPHEL

Written upon the death of the Right Honourable Sir
 Phillip Sidney, Knight, Lord Governour of Flushing.

[First printed in "*The Phoenix Nest. Built up with the most rare and refined workes of Noble men, woorthy Knights, gallant Gentlemen, Masters of Arts and brave Schollers. Full of varietie, excellent invention, and singular delight,*" etc. 1593. Reprinted with *Spenser's Astrophel*.]

As then, no wind at all there blew,
 No swelling cloud accloyed the air,

The sky, like grass of watchet hue,
Reflected Phoebus' golden hair ;
The garnished tree no pendant stirred,
No voice was heard of any bird.

There might you see the burly Bear,
The Lion king, the Elephant,
The maiden Unicorn was there,
So was Actæon's hornèd plant :
And what of wild or tame are found,
Were couched in order on the ground.

Alcides' speckled poplar tree ;
The palm that Monarchs do obtain ;
With love-juice stained the mulberry,
The fruit that dews the poet's brain ;
And Phillis' filbert there away
Compared with myrtle and the bay :

The tree that coffins doth adorn,
With stately height threat'ning the sky,
And, for the bed of love forlorn,
The black and doleful ebony :
All in a circle compassed were
Like to an amphitheatre.

Upon the branches of those trees,
The airy wingèd people sat,
Distinguishèd in odd degrees ;
One sort is this, another that.
Here Philomel that knows full well
What force and wit in love doth dwell.

The sky-bred Eagle, royal bird,
Perched there upon an oak above ;
The Turtle by him never stirred,
Example of immortal love.
The Swan that sings about to die,
Leaving Meander stood thereby.

And that which was of wonder most,
The Phoenix left sweet Araby ;
And on a Cedar in this coast,
Built up her tomb of spicery,
 As I conjecture by the same,
 Prepared to take her dying flame.

In midst and centre of this plot,
I saw one grovelling on the grass ;
A man or stone, I knew not that ;
No stone ; of man the figure was,
 And yet I could not count him one,
 More than the image made of stone.

At length I might perceive him rear
His body on his elbow end :
Earthly and pale with ghastly cheer,
Upon his knees he upward tend ;
 Seeming like one in uncouth stound
 To be ascending out the ground.

A grievous sigh forthwith he throws,
As might have torn the vital strings ;
Then down his cheeks the tears so flows
As doth the stream of many springs.
 So thunder rends the cloud in twain,
 And makes a passage for the rain.

Incontinent with trembling sound,
He woefully 'gan to complain :
Such were the accents as might wound,
And tear a diamond rock in twain ;
 After his throbs did somewhat stay,
 Thus heavily he 'gan to say

“O sun!” said he, seeing the sun,
“On wretched me, why dost thou shine ?
My star is fallen, my comfort done ;
Out is the apple of my eyen.
 Shine upon those possess delight,
 And let me live in endless night !

- “O grief! that liest upon my soul,
As heavy as a mount of lead;
The remnant of my life control,
Consort me quickly with the dead!
Half of this heart, this sprite and will,
Died in the breast of Astrophil.
- “And you compassionate of my woe,
Gentle birds, beasts, and shady trees!
I am assured ye long to know
What be the sorrows me aggrieves;
Listen ye then to that ensu'th,
And hear a tale of tears and ruth.
- “You knew, who knew not Astrophil?
(That I should live to say I knew,
And have not in possession still!)
Things known, permit me to renew:
Of him you know his merit such,
I cannot say, you hear too much.
- “Within these woods of Arcady,
His chief delight and pleasure took;
And on the mountain Partheny,
Upon the crystal liquid brook,
The Muses met him every day,
That taught him sing, to write, and say.
- “When he descended down the mount,
His personage seemed most divine;
A thousand graces one might count
Upon his lovely cheerful eyen;
To hear him speak, and sweetly smile;
You were in Paradise the while.
- “A sweet attractive kind of grace;
A full assurance given by looks;
Continual comfort in a face,
The lineaments of Gospel books;
I trow that countenance cannot lie,
Whose thoughts are legible in the eye.

“Was never eye did see that face ;
Was never ear did hear that tongue ;
Was never mind did mind his grace ;
That never thought the travail long :
But eyes and ears and every thought,
Were with his sweet perfections caught.

“O God ! that such a worthy man,
In whom so rare deserts did reign ;
Desired thus, must leave us then :
And we to wish for him in vain.
O could the stars that bred that wit,
In force no longer fixèd sit.

“Then being filled with learned dew
The Muses willèd him to love :
That instrument can aptly show,
How finely our conceits will move.
As Bacchus opes dissembled hearts,
So love sets out our better parts.

“Stella, a nymph within this wood,
Most rare, and rich of heavenly bliss ;
The highest in his fancy stood,
And she could well demerit this.
'Tis likely, they acquainted soon :
He was a sun, and she a moon.

“Our Astrophil did Stella love.
O Stella ! vaunt of Astrophil !
Albeit thy graces gods may move ;
Where wilt thou find an Astrophil ?
The rose and lily have their prime ;
And so hath beauty but a time.

“Although thy beauty do exceed
In common sight of every eye ;
Yet in his poesies when we read,
It is apparent more thereby.
He that hath love and judgment too,
Sees more than any others do.

- “Then Astrophil hath honoured thee;
For when thy body is extinct,
Thy graces shall eternal be
And live by virtue of his ink.
For by his verses he doth give
To shortlived beauty aye to live.
- “Above all others this is he,
Which erst approvèd in his song
That love and honour might agree,
And that pure love will do no wrong.
Sweet saints! it is no sin nor blame
To love a man of virtuous name.
- “Did never love so sweetly breathe
In any mortal breast before;
Did never Muse inspire beneath,
A poet's brain with finer store;
He wrote of love with high conceit;
And beauty reared above her height.
- “Then Pallas afterward attired
Our Astrophil with her device,
Whom in his armour heaven admired,
As of the nation of the skies:
He sparkled in his arms afars,
As he were dight with fiery stars.”
- “The blaze whereof, when Mars beheld
(An envious eye doth see afar)
‘Such majesty,’ quoth he, ‘is seld.
Such majesty, my mart may mar.
Perhaps this may a suitor be
To set Mars by his deity?’
- “In this surmise, he made with speed
An iron can, wherein he put
The thunders that in clouds do breed;
The flame and bolt together shut,
With privy force burst out again;
And so our Astrophil was slain.”

His word, "was slain," straightway did move,
And Nature's inward life-strings twitch ;
The sky immediately above
Was dimmed with hideous clouds of pitch ;
 The wrastling winds, from out the ground
 Filled all the air with rattling sound.

The bending trees expressed a groan,
And sighed the sorrow of his fall ;
The forest beasts made ruthful moan ;
The birds did tune their mourning call,
 And Philomel for Astrophil,
 Unto her notes, annexed a "phil."

The turtle dove with tones of ruth,
Showed feeling passion of his death ;
Methought she said "I tell thee truth,
Was never he that drew in breath,
 Unto his love more trusty found,
 Than he for whom our griefs abound."

The swan that was in presence here,
Began his funeral dirge to sing ;
"Good things," quoth he, "may scarce appear ;
But pass away with speedy wing.
 This mortal life as death is tried,
 And death gives life, and so he died.

The general sorrow that was made
Among the creatures of kind,
Fired the Phoenix where she laid,
Her ashes flying with the wind.
 So as I might with reason see
 That such a Phoenix ne'er should be.

Haply, the cinders driven about,
May breed an offspring near that kind ;
But hardly a peer to that, I doubt :
It cannot sink into my mind
 That under branches e'er can be,
 Of worth and value as the tree.

The eagle marked with piercing sight
 The mournful habit of the place ;
 And parted thence with mounting flight,
 To signify to Jove the case :
 What sorrow Nature doth sustain,
 For Astrophil, by envy slain.

And while I followed with mine eye
 The flight the eagle upward took ;
 All things did vanish by and by,
 And disappeared from my look.
 The trees, beasts, birds and grove were gone :
 So was the friend that made this moan.

This spectacle had firmly wrought
 A deep compassion in my sprite ;
 My molten heart issued methought,
 In streams forth at mine eyes aright :
 And here my pen is forced to shrink ;
 My tears discolour so my ink.

*Matthew Roydon,
 flourit 1580—1622.*



AN EPITAPH ON CLERE

[*“Songes and Sonettes written by the ryght honorable Lorde Henry Howard, late Earle of Surrey, and other. Apud Richardum Tottel, 1557.”*]

Norfolk sprung thee, Lambeth holds thee dead ;
 Clere, of the Count of Cleremont, thou hight,
 Within the womb of Ormond's race thou bred,
 And sawst thy cousin crownèd in thy sight.
 Shelton for love, Surrey for lord thou chase ;
 (Aye, me ! whilst life did last that league was tender)
 Tracing whose steps thou sawest Kelsal blaze,
 Landrecy burnt, and battered Boulogne render.
 At Montreuil gates, hopeless of all recure,
 Thine Earl, half dead, gave in thy hand his will ;

Which cause did thee this pining death procure,
Ere summers four times seven thou couldst fulfil.
Ah, Clere! if love had bootéd, care, or cost,
Heaven had not won, nor earth so timely lost.

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey,
1517?—1547.



AN EPITAPH

Upon the Right Honourable Sir Phillip Sidney,
Knight, Lord Governor of Flushing

[Originally printed in the "Phoenix Nest," 1593; reprinted
with Spenser's "Astrophel." It is ascribed to Raleigh, on
the authority of Sir John Harrington, and Drummond of
Hawthornden.]

To praise thy life or wail thy worthy death;
And want thy wit, thy wit pure, high, divine,
Is far beyond the power of mortal line,
Nor any one hath worth that draweth breath.

Yet rich in zeal, though poor in learning's lore;
And friendly care obscured in secret breast,
And love that envy in thy life suppress,
Thy dear life done, and death hath doubled more.

And I, that in thy time and living state,
Did only praise thy virtues in my thought;
As one that sold the rising sun hath sought:
With words and tears now wail thy timeless fate.

Drawn was thy race aright from princely line,
Nor less than such (by gifts that Nature gave,
The common mother that all creatures have)
Doth virtue show, and princely lineage shine.

A King gave thee thy name; a kingly mind
That GOD thee gave: who found it now too dear
For this base world; and hath resumed it near,
To sit in skies, and 'sort with powers divine.

Kent thy birth days ; and Oxford held thy youth.
The heavens made haste, and stayed nor years nor time ;
The fruits of age grew ripe in thy first prime :
Thy will, thy words ; thy words, the seals of truth.

Great gifts and wisdom rare employed thee thence,
To treat from kings, with those more great than kings.
Such hope men had to lay the highest things
On thy wise youth, to be transported hence.

Whence to sharp wars, sweet Honour did thee call,
Thy country's love, religion, and thy friends :
Of worthy men, the marks, the lives and ends ;
And her defence, for whom we labour all.

These didst thou vanquish shame and tedious age,
Grief, sorrow, sickness, and base fortune's might.
Thy rising day saw never woeful night,
But passed with praise from off this worldly stage.

Back to the camp, by thee that day was brought
First, thine own death ; and after, thy long fame ;
Tears to the soldiers ; the proud Castilians' shame ;
Virtue expressed ; and honour truly taught.

What hath he lost that such great grace hath won ?
Young years, for endless years ; and hope unsure
Of fortune's gifts, for wealth that still shall 'dure.
O happy race ! with so great praises run.

England doth hold thy limbs, that bred the same ;
Flanders, thy valour, where it last was tried.
The camp, thy sorrow, where thy body died.
Thy friends, thy want ; the world, thy virtues fame.

Nations, thy wit ; our minds lay up thy love,
Letters, thy learning ; thy loss, years long to come.
In worthy hearts, sorrow hath made thy tomb ;
Thy soul and sprite enrich the heavens above.

Thy liberal heart embalmed in grateful tears,
Young sighs, sweet sighs, sage sighs bewail thy fall.
Envy, her sting, and Spite hath left her gall,
Malice herself, a mourning garment wears.

That day their Hannibal died, our Scipio fell :
 Scipio, Cicero, and Petrarch of our time :
 Whose virtues, wounded by my worthless rhyme,
 Let angels speak, and heaven thy praises tell.

Sir Walter Raleigh,
 1552—1618.



A POEM

Upon the Death of His Late Highness the
 Lord Protector

[*First published in Captain Thompson's edition of Marvell,*
3 vols. 4to, 1776. Cromwell died September 3, 1658.]

That Providence which had so long the care
 Of Cromwell's head, and numbered every hair,
 Now in itself (the glass where all appears)
 Had seen the period of his golden years,
 And henceforth only did attend to trace
 What death might least so fair a life deface.

The people, which, what most they fear, esteem,
 Death when more horrid, so more noble deem,
 And blame the last act, like spectators vain,
 Unless the Prince, whom they applaud, be slain ;
 Nor fate indeed can well refuse the right
 To those that lived in war, to die in fight.

But long his valour none had left that could
 Endanger him, or clemency that would ;
 And he (whom Nature all for peace had made,
 But angry Heaven unto war had swayed,
 And so less useful where he most desired,
 For what he least affected was admired ;)
 Deservèd yet an end whose every part
 Should speak the wondrous softness of his heart.
 To Love and Grief the fatal writ was 'signed,
 (Those nobler weaknesses of human kind,
 From which those Powers that issued the decree,
 Although immortal, found they were not free)

That they to whom his breast still open lies
In gentle passions, should his death disguise,
And leave succeeding ages cause to mourn,
As long as Grief shall weep, or Love shall burn.

Straight does a slow and languishing disease,
Eliza, Nature's and his darling, seize ;
Her, when an infant, taken with her charms,
He oft would flourish in his mighty arms,
And lest their force the tender burthen wrong,
Slacken the vigour of his muscles strong ;
Then to the mother's breast her softly move,
Which, while she drained of milk, she filled with love.
But as with riper years her virtue grew,
And every minute adds a lustre new ;
When with meridian height her beauty shined,
And thorough that sparkled her fairer mind ;
When she with smiles serene, in words discreet,
His hidden soul at every turn could meet ;
Then might you have daily his affection spied,
Doubling that knot which destiny had tied,
While they by sense, not knowing, comprehend
How on each other both their fates depend.
With her each day the pleasing hours he shares,
And at her aspect calms his growing cares ;
Or with a grandsire's joy her children sees,
Hanging about her neck, or at his knees :
Hold fast, dear infants, hold them both, or none ;
This will not stay, when once the other's gone.
A silent fire now wastes those limbs of wax,
And him within his tortured image racks.
So the flower, withering, which the garden crowned,
The sad root pines in secret under ground.
Each groan he doubled, and each sigh she sighed,
Repeated over to the restless night ;
No trembling string, composed to numbers new,
Answers the touch in notes more sad, more true.
She, lest he grieve, hides what she can, her pains ;
And he, to lessen hers, his sorrow feigns ;

Yet both perceived, yet both concealed their skills,
And so, diminishing, increased their ills,
That whether by each other's grief they fell,
Or on their own redoubled, none can tell.

And now Eliza's purple locks were shorn,
Where she so long her father's fate had worn ;
And frequent lightning, to her soul that flies,
Divides the air and opens all the skies.
And now his life, suspended by her breath,
Ran out impetuously to hastening Death.
Like polished mirrors, so his steely breast
Had every figure of her woes expressed,
And with the damp of her last gasps obscured,
Had drawn such stains as were not to be cured.
Fate could not either reach with single stroke,
But, the dear image fled, the mirror broke.
Who now shall tell us more of mournful swans,
Of halycons kind, or bleeding pelicans?
No downy breast did e'er so gently beat,
Or fan with airy plumes so soft an heat ;
For he no duty by his height excused,
Nor, though a prince, to be a man refused ;
But rather than in his Eliza's pain,
Not love, not grieve, would neither live nor reign ;
And in himself so oft immortal tried,
Yet in compassion of another died.

So have I seen a vine, whose lasting age,
Of many a winter hath survived the rage,
Under whose shady tent men every year
At its rich blood's expense, their sorrows cheer ;
If some dear branch where it extends its life
Chance to be pruned by an untimely knife,
The parent tree unto the grief succeeds,
And through the wound its vital humour bleeds ;
Trickling in watery drops, whose flowing shape
Weeps that it falls ere fixed into a grape ;
So the dry stock, no more that spreading vine,
Frustrates the autumn, and the hopes of wine.

A secret cause does sure those signs ordain,
Foreboding princes' falls, and seldom vain :
Whether some kinder powers, that wish us well,
What they above cannot prevent, foretell ;
Or the great world do by consent presage,
As hollow seas with future tempests rage ;
Or rather Heaven, which us so long foresees
Their funerals celebrates, while it decrees.
But never yet was any human fate
By Nature solemnised with so much state :
He, unconcerned, the dreadful passage crossed,
But oh ! what pangs that death did Nature cost !

First the great thunder was shot off, and sent
The signal from the starry battlement :
The winds receive it, and its force outdo,
As practising how they could thunder too ;
Out of the binder's hand the sheaves they tore,
And thrashed the harvest in the airy floor ;
Or of huge trees, whose growth with his did rise,
The deep foundations opened to the skies ;
Then heavy showers the wingèd tempests lead,
And pour the deluge o'er the chaos' head.
The race of warlike horses at his tomb
Offer themselves in many a hecatomb ;
With pensive head towards the ground they fall,
And helpless languish at the tainted stall.
Numbers of men decrease with pains unknown,
And hasten (not to see his death) their own.
Such tortures all the elements unfixed,
Troubled to part where so exactly mixed ;
And as through air his wasting spirits flowed,
The world with throes laboured beneath their load.

Nature, it seemed, with him would nature vie,
He with Eliza, it with him, would die.

He without noise still travelled to his end,
As silent suns to meet the night descend ;
The stars that for him fought had only power
Left to determine now his fatal hour,

Which, since they might not hinder, yet they cast
To choose it worthy of his glories past.
No part of time but bare his mark away
Of honour,—all the year was Cromwell's day ;
But this, of all the most auspicious found,
Twice had in open field him victor crowned ;
When up the armèd mountains of Dunbar
He marched, and through deep Severn, ending war :
What day should him eternise, but the same
That had before immortalised his name ?
That so whoe'er would at his death have joyed,
In their own griefs might find themselves employed ;
But those that sadly his departure grieved,
Yet joyed, remembering what he once achieved ;
And the last minute his victorious ghost
Gave chase to Ligny on the Belgic coast :
Here ended all his mortal toils ; he laid
And slept in peace under the laurel shade.

O Cromwell ! Heaven's favourite, to none
Have such high honours from above been shown,
For whom the elements we mourners see,
And Heaven itself would the great herald be ;
Which with more care set forth his obsequies
Than those of Moses, hid from human eyes ;
As jealous only here, lest all be less
Than we could to his memory express.

Then let us too our course of mourning keep ;
Where Heaven leads, 'tis piety to weep.
Stand back, ye seas, and shrunk beneath the veil
Of your abyss, with covered head bewail
Your monarch : we demand not your supplies
To compass—in our isle,—our tears suffice,
Since him away the dismal tempest rent,
Who once more joined us to the continent ;
Who planted England on the Flanderic shore,
And stretched our frontier to the Indian ore ;
Whose greater truths obscure the fables old,
Whether of British saints or worthies told,

And in a valour lessening Arthur's deeds,
For holiness the Confessor exceeds.

He first put arms into Religion's hand,
And timorous conscience unto courage manned ;
The soldier taught that inward mail to wear,
And fearing God, how they should nothing fear ;
Those strokes, he said, will pierce through all below,
Where those that strike from Heaven fetch their blow.
Astonished armies did their flight prepare,
And cities strong were stormèd by his prayer ;
Of that for ever Preston's field shall tell
The story, and impregnable Clonmel,
And where the sandy mountain Fenwick scaled,
The sea between, yet hence his prayer prevailed.
What man was ever so in Heaven obeyed
Since the commanded sun o'er Gibeon stayed ?
In all his wars needs must he triumph, when
He conquered God, still ere he fought with men :
Hence, though in battle none so brave or fierce,
Yet him the adverse steel could never pierce ;
Pity it seemed to hurt him more, that felt
Each wound himself which he to others dealt,
Danger itself refusing to offend
So loose an enemy, so fast a friend.
Friendship, that sacred virtue, long does claim
The first foundation of his house and name :
But within one its narrow limits fall,
His tenderness extendeth unto all,
And that deep soul through every channel flows,
Where kindly Nature loves itself to lose.
More strong affections never reason served,
Yet still affected most what best deserved.
If he Eliza loved to that degree,
(Though who more worthy to be loved than she ?)
If so indulgent to his own, how dear
To him the children of the Highest were !
For her he once did Nature's tribute pay ;
For these his life adventured every day ;

And 'twould be found, could we his thoughts have cast,
Their griefs struck deepest, if Eliza's last.
What prudence more than human did he need,
To keep so dear, so differing minds agreed?
The worsser sort, so conscious of their ill,
Lie weak and easy to the ruler's will;
But to the good (too many or too few)
All law is useless, all reward is due.
Oh! ill-advised, if not for love, for shame,
Spare yet your own, if you neglect his fame;
Lest others dare to think your zeal a mask,
And you to govern only Heaven's task.
Valour, Religion, Friendship, Prudence died
At once with him, and all that's good beside;
And we, Death's refuge, Nature's dregs, confined
To loathsome life, alas! are left behind.
Where we (so once we used) shall now no more
To fetch day, press about his chamber-door,
From which he issued with that awful state,
It seemed Mars broke through Janus' double gate;
Yet always tempered with an air so mild,
No April suns that ere so gentle smiled;
No more shall hear that powerful language charm,
Whose force oft spared the labour of his arm;
No more shall follow where he spent the days
In war, in counsel, or in prayer and praise,
Whose meanest acts he would himself advance,
As ungirt David to the ark did dance.
All, all is gone of ours or his delight
In horses fierce, wild deer, or armour bright;
Francisca fair can nothing now but weep,
Nor with soft notes shall sing his cares asleep.
I saw him dead: a leaden slumber lies,
And mortal sleep over those wakeful eyes;
Those gentle rays under the lids were fled,
Which through his looks that piercing sweetness shed;
That port which so majestic was and strong,
Loose and deprived of vigour, stretched along;

All withered, all discoloured, pale and wan,
How much another thing, no more that man !
O, human glory vain ! O, Death ! O, wings !
O, worthless world ! O, transitory things !
Yet dwelt that greatness in his shape decayed,
That still though dead, greater than Death he laid,
And in his altered face you something feign
That threatens Death, he yet will live again.
Not much unlike the sacred oak, which shoots
To Heaven its branches, and through earth its roots ;
Whose spacious boughs are hung with trophies round,
And honoured wreaths have oft the victor crowned ;
When angry Jove darts lightning through the air
At mortal sins, nor his own plant will spare,
It groans and bruises all below, that stood
So many years the shelter of the wood ;
The tree, erewhile foreshortened to our view,
When fallen shows taller yet than as it grew ;
So shall his praise to after times increase,
When truth shall be allowed, and faction cease ;
And his own shadows with him fall ; the eye
Detracts from objects than itself more high ;
But when Death takes them from that envied state,
Seeing how little, we confess how great.

Thee, many ages hence, in martial verse
Shall the English soldier, ere he charge, rehearse ;
Singing of thee, inflame himself to fight,
And, with the name of Cromwell, armies fright.
As long as rivers to the seas shall run,
As long as Cynthia shall relieve the sun,
While stags shall fly unto the forests thick,
While sheep delight the grassy downs to pick,
As long as future time succeeds the past,
Always thy honour, praise and name, shall last !

Thou in a pitch how far beyond the sphere
Of human glory tower'st, and reigning there,
Despoiled of mortal robes, in seas of bliss,
Plunging, dost bathe, and tread the bright abyss !

There thy great soul yet once a world doth see,
Spacious enough and pure enough for thee.
How soon thou Moses hast, and Joshua found,
And David, for the sword and harp renowned ;
How straight canst to each happy mansion go,
(Far better known above than here below),
And in those joys dost spend the endless day,
Which in expressing, we ourselves betray !

For we, since thou art gone, with heavy doom,
Wander like ghosts about thy lovèd tomb,
And lost in tears, have neither sight nor mind
To guide us upward through this region blind ;
Since thou art gone, who best that way could teach,
Only our sighs, perhaps, may thither reach.

And Richard yet, where his great parent led,
Beats on the rugged track : he virtue dead
Revives, and by his milder beams assures ;
And yet how much of them his grief obscures !
He, as his father, long was kept from sight
In private, to be viewed by better light ;
But opened once, what splendour does he throw !
A Cromwell in an hour a prince will grow.
How he becomes that seat, how strongly strains,
How gently winds at once the ruling reins !
Heaven to this choice prepared a diadem,
Richer than any Eastern silk, or gem,
A pearly rainbow, where the sun inched,
His brows, like an imperial jewel graced.

We find already what those omens mean,
Earth ne'er more glad, nor Heaven more serene.
Cease now our griefs, calm peace succeeds a war,
Rainbows to storms, Richard to Oliver.
Tempt not his clemency to try his power,
He threats no deluge, yet foretells a shower.

Andrew Marvell,
1621—1678.

ASTROPHEL

[*Printed with "Colin Clouts Come Home Again," 1595.*]

A Pastoral Elegy

Upon the Death of the most Noble and Valorous Knight,
Sir Philip Sidney.

Dedicated to the most Beautiful and Virtuous Lady,
The Countess of Essex.

Shepherds, that wont, on pipes of oaten reed,
Oft times to plaine your loves concealed smart ;
And with your piteous lays have learned to breed
Compassion in a country lass's heart.
Hearken, ye gentle shepherds, to my song,
And place my doleful plaint your plaints among.

To you alone I sing this mournful verse,
The mournfulst verse that ever man heard tell :
To you whose softened hearts it may empierce
With dolour's dart for death of Astrophel.
To you I sing and to none other wight,
For well I wot my rhymes been rudely dight.

Yet as they been, if any nicer wit
Shall hap to hear, or covet them to read :
Think he, that such are for such ones most fit,
Made not to please the living but the dead.
And if in him found pity ever place,
Let him be moved to pity such a case.

ASTROPHEL

A Gentle Shepherd born in Arcady,
Of gentlest race that ever shepherd bore,
About the grassy banks of Hæmony
Did keep his sheep, his little stock and store :
Full carefully he kept them day and night,
In fairest fields ; and Astrophel he hight.

Young Astrophel, the pride of shepherd's praise,
Young Astrophel, the rustic lasses' love :
Far passing all the pastors of his days,
In all that seemly shepherd might behove.
In one thing only failing of the best,
That he was not so happy as the rest.

For from the time that first the Nymph his mother
Him forth did bring, and taught her lambs to feed ;
A slender swain, excelling far each other,
In comely shape, like her that did him breed,
He grew up fast in goodness and in grace,
And doubly fair wox both in mind and face.

Which daily more and more he did augment,
With gentle usage and demeanour mild :
That all men's hearts with secret ravishment
He stole away, and weetingly beguiled.
Ne spite itself, that all good things doth spill,
Found aught in him, that she could say was ill.

His sports were fair, his joyance innocent,
Sweet without sour, and honey without gall :
And he himself seemed made for merriment,
Merrily masking both in bower and hall.
There was no pleasure nor delightful play,
When Astrophel so ever was away.

For he could pipe, and dance and carol sweet,
Amongst the shepherds in their shearing feast ;
As summer's lark that with her song doth greet
The dawning day forth coming from the east.
And lays of love he also could compose :
Thrice happy she, whom he to praise did choose.

Full many maidens often did him woo,
Them to vouchsafe amongst his rhymes to name,
Or make for them as he was wont to do
For her that did his heart with love inflame.

For which they promised to dight for him
Gay chapelets of flowers and gyrlonds trim,

And many a Nymph both of the wood and brook,
Soon as his oaten pipe began to shrill,
Both crystal wells and shady groves forsook,
To hear the charms of his enchanting skill ;
And brought him presents, flowers if it were prime,
Or mellow fruit if it were harvest time.

But he for none of them did care a whit,
Yet woodgods for them often sighèd sore :
Ne for their gifts unworthy of his wit,
Yet not unworthy of the country's store.
For one alone he cared, for one he sigh't,
His life's desire, and his dear love's delight.

✓ Stella the fair, the fairest star in sky,
As fair as Venus or the fairest-fair, —
(A fairer star saw never living eye)
Shot her sharp pointed beams through purest air.
Her he did love, her he alone did honour,
His thoughts, his rhymes, his songs were all upon her.

To her he vowed the service of his days,
On her he spent the riches of his wit :
For her he made hymns of immortal praise,
Of only her he sung, he thought, he writ.
Her, and but her, of love he worthy deemed ;
For all the rest but little he esteemed.

Ne her with idle words alone he wowed,*
And verses vain, (yet verses are not vain,)
But with brave deeds to her sole service vowed,
And bold achievements her did entertain.
For both in deeds and words he nurtured was,
Both wise and hardy, (too hardy, alas !)

* wooed.

In wrestling nimble, and in running swift,
In shooting steady, and in swimming strong :
Well made to strike, to throw, to leap, to lift,
And all the sports that shepherds are among.
In every one he vanquished every one,
He vanquished all, and vanquished was of none.

Besides, in hunting such felicity,
Or rather infelicity, he found,
That every field and forest far away
He sought, where savage beasts do most abound.
No beast so savage but he could it kill ;
No chase so hard, but he therein had skill.

Such skill, matched with such courage as he had,
Did prick him forth with proud desire of praise
To seek abroad, of danger nought ydrad,*
His mistress' name, and his own fame to raise.
What needeth peril to be sought abroad,
Since round about us it doth make abroad ! †

It fortunèd as he that perilous game
In foreign soil pursuèd far away,
Into a forest wide and waste he came,
Where store he heard to be of savage prey.
So wide a forest and so waste as this,
Nor famous Ardeyn, nor foul Arlo, is.

There his well-woven toils, and subtle trains,
He laid the brutish nation to enwrap :
So well he wrought with practice and with pains,
That he of them great troops did soon entrap.
Full happy man (misweening much) was he,
So rich a spoil within his power to see.

Eftsoones, all heedless of his dearest hale,
Full greedily into the herd he thrust,
To slaughter them, and work their final bale,
Lest that his toil should of their troops be burst. ‡

* afraid.

† abode.

‡ burst.

Wide wounds amongst them many one he made,
Now with his sharp boar-spear, now with his blade.

His care was all how he them all might kill,
That none might 'scape, (so partial unto none :)
Ill mind so much to mind another's ill,
As to become unmindful of his own.
But pardon that unto the cruel skies,
That from himself to them withdrew his eyes.

So as he raged amongst that beastly rout,
A cruel beast of most accursèd brood
Upon him turned, (despair makes cowards stout,)
And, with fell tooth accusomèd to blood,
Launchèd his thigh with so mischievous might,
That it both bone and muscles rivèd quite.

So deadly was the dint and deep the wound,
And so huge streams of blood thereout did flow,
That he endured not the direful stound,
But on the cold dear earth himself did throw ;
The whiles the captive herd his nets did rend,
And, having none to let, to wood did wend.

Ah ! where were ye this while, his shepherd peers,
To whom alive was nought so dear as he :
And ye fair maids, the matches of his years,
Which in his grace did boast you most to be !
Ah ! where were ye, when he of you had need,
To stop his wound that wondrously did bleed !

Ah ! wretched boy, the shape of drearyhead,
And sad ensample of man's sudden end :
Full little faileth but thou shalt be dead,
Unpitied, unplained, of foe or friend :
Whilst none is nigh, thine eyelids up to close,
And kiss thy lips like faded leaves of rose.

A sort of shepherds, sewing* of the chase,
As they the forest rangèd on a day,
By fate or fortune came unto the place,
Where as the luckless boy yet bleeding lay ;
Yet bleeding lay, and yet would still have bled,
Had not good hap those shepherds thither led.

They stopped his wound, (too late to stop it was !)
And in their arms then softly did him rear :
Tho† (as he willed) unto his lovèd lass,
His dearest love, him dolefully did bear.
The dolefulst bear‡ that ever man did see,
Was Astrophel, but dearest unto me !

She, when she saw her love in such a plight,
With curdled blood and filthy gore deformed,
That wont to be with flowers and gyrlonds dight,
And her dear favours dearly well adorned ;
Her face, the fairest face that eye might see,
She likewise did deform, like him to be.

Her yellow locks that shone so bright and long,
As sunny beams in fairest summer's day,
She fiercely tore, and with outrageous wrong
From her red cheeks the roses rent away ;
And her fair breast, the treasury of joy,
She spoiled thereof, and fillèd with annoy.

His pallid face, impicturèd with death,
She bathèd oft with tears, and drièd oft :
And with sweet kisses sucked the wasting breath
Out of his lips like lilies pale and soft :
And oft she called to him, who answered nought,
But only by his looks did tell his thought.

The rest of her impatient regret,
And piteous moan the which she for him made,
No tongue can tell, nor any forth can set,
But he whose heart like sorrow did invade.

* following.

† then."

‡ burden.

At last, when pain his vital powers had spent,
His wasted life her weary lodge forwent.

Which when she saw, she stayèd not a whit,
But after him did make untimely haste :
Forth-with her ghost out of her corpse did flit,
And followèd her make * like turtle chaste,
To prove that death their hearts cannot divide,
Which living were in love so firmly tied.

The gods, which all things see, this same beheld,
And, pitying this pair of lovers true,
Transformèd them, there lying on the field,
Into one flower that is both red and blue ;
It first grows red, and then to blue doth fade,
Like Astrophel, which thereinto was made.

And in the midst thereof a star appears,
As fairly formed as any star in skies ;
Resembling Stella in her freshest years,
Forth darting beams of beauty from her eyes :
And all the day it standeth full of dew,
Which is the tears, that from her eyes did flow.

That herb of some Starlight is called by name,
Of others Penthia, though not so well :
But thou, wherever thou dost find the same,
From this day forth do call it Astrophel :
And, whensoever thou it up do take,
Do pluck it softly for that shepherd's sake.

Hereof when tidings far abroad did pass,
The shepherds all which lovèd him full dear,
And sure full dear of all he lovèd was,
Did thither flock to see what they did hear,
And when that piteous spectacle they viewed,
The same with bitter tears they all bedewed.

* companion.

And every one did make exceeding moan,
 With inward anguish and great grief oppressed :
 And every one did weep, and wail, and moan,
 And means devised to show his sorrow best.
 That from that hour, since first on grassy green
 Shepherds kept sheep, was not like mourning seen.

But first his sister that Clorinda hight,
 The gentlest shepherdess that lives this day,
 And most resembling both in shape and spright
 Her brother dear, began this doleful lay.
 Which, lest I mar the sweetness of the verse,
 In sort as she it sung I will rehearse.



THE DOLEFUL LAY OF CLORINDA

[*These verses are supposed to have been written by Mary, Countess of Pembroke, Sir Philip Sidney's sister; but I have been unable to resist a suspicion (entertained, I have since seen, also by Mr F. T. Palgrave; see Grosart's "Spenser," vol. iv. ciii.) that it was freely revised, or even written by Spenser. Certainly the resemblance to his style is very striking in places. Mr Palgrave remarks that "the mystification would be quite in accordance with the mystical character of the Introduction."*]

"Aye me! to whom shall I my case complain,
 That may compassion my impatient grief?
 Or where shall I unfold my inward pain
 That my enriven heart may find relief?
 Shall I unto the heavenly powers it show,
 Or unto earthly men that dwell below?"

"To heavens! Ah, they, alas, the authors were
 And workers of my unremedied woe;
 For they foresee what to us happens here,
 And they foresaw, yet suffered this be so.
 From them comes good, from them comes also ill;
 That which they made, who can them warn to spill?"

- “ To men ! Ah, they, alas, like wretched be
And subject to the heavens' ordinance ;
Bound to abide whatever they decree,
Their best redress is their best sufferance.
How then can they, like wretched, comfort me ?
The which no less need comforted to be.
- “ Then to myself will I my sorrow mourn,
Sith none alive like sorrowful remains :
And to myself my complaints shall back return,
To pay their usury with doubled pains.
The woods, the hills, the rivers shall resound
The mournful accent of my sorrow's ground.
- “ Woods, hills, and rivers now are desolate ;
Sith he is gone the which them all did grace :
And all the fields do wail their widow-state ;
Sith death their fairest flower did late deface.
The fairest flower in field that ever grew,
Was Astrophel : that 'was,' we all may rue.
- “ What cruel hand of cursèd foe unknown,
Hath cropped the stalk which bore so fair a flower ?
Untimely cropped before it well were grown,
And clean defacèd in untimely hour.
Great loss to all that ever him did see,
Great loss to all, but greatest loss to me !
- “ Break now your gyrlonds, O ye shepherds' lasses !
Sith the fair flower, which them adorned, is gone :
The flower which them adorned, is gone to ashes,
Never again let lass put gyrlond on.
Instead of gyrlond, wear sad cypress now ;
And bitter elder, broken from the bough.
- “ Ne ever sing the love-lays which he made ;
Who ever made such lays of love as he ?
Ne ever read the riddles, which he said
Unto yourselves, to make you merry glee.

Your merry glee is now laid all abed,
Your merry maker now, alas ! is dead.

“ Death ! the devourer of all world’s delight,
Hath robbèd you, and reft from me my joy ;
Both you and me and all the world, he quite
Hath robbed of joyance ; and left sad annoy.
Joy of the world ! and shepherds’ pride was he :
Shepherds, hope never like again to see.

“ Oh, Death ! that hast us of such riches reft,
Tell us at least, what hast thou with it done ?
What is become of him, whose flower here left
Is but the shadow of his likeness gone.
Scarce like the shadow of that which he was :
Nought like, but that he like a shade did pass.

“ But that immortal spirit, which was deckt
With all the dowries of celestial grace ;
By sovereign choice from th’ heavenly quires select,
And lineally derived from angels’ race :
O what is now of it become aread.*
Aye me ! can so divine a thing be dead ?

“ Ah no ! It is not dead, ne can it die ;
But lives for aye in blissful paradise :
Where, like a new-born babe, it soft doth lie
In bed of lilies, wrapped in tender wise :
And compassed all about with roses sweet,
And dainty violets from head to feet.

“ There thousand birds, all of celestial brood,
To him do sweetly carol day and night ;
And with strange notes, of him well understood,
Lull him asleep in angelic delight :
Whilst in sweet dream, to him presented be
Immortal beauties, which no eye may see.

* declare.

- “ But he them sees, and takes exceeding pleasure
 Of their divine aspects, appearing plain ;
 And kindling love in him above all measure,
 Sweet love, still joyous, never feeling pain ;
 For what so goodly form he there doth see,
 He may enjoy, from jealous rancour free.
- “ There liveth he in everlasting bliss,
 Sweet spirit never fearing more to die :
 Ne dreading harm from any foes of his,
 Ne fearing savage beasts’ more cruelty.
 Whilst we here, wretches, wail his private lack ;
 And with vain vows do often call him back.
- “ But live thou there still happy, happy spirit !
 And give us leave thee here thus to lament :
 Not thee, that dost thy heaven’s joy inherit ;
 But our own selves, that here in dole are drent.
 Thus do we weep and wail, and wear our eyes,
 Mourning in others our own miseries.”

Edmund Spenser,
 1552—1599.



THE FOURTH ECLOGUE OF THE SHEPHERD’S PIPE

[“ *The Shepheard’s Pipe*, London, 1614.”]

THE ARGUMENT.—In this the Author bewails the death of one whom he shadoweth under the name of Philarete, compounded of the Greek words, φίλος and ἀρετή, a lover of virtue, a name well befitting him to whose memory these lines are consecrated, being sometime his truly loved (and now as much lamented) friend, Mr Thomas Manwood, son to the worthy Sir Peter Manwood, Knight.

Under an agèd oak was Willie laid,
 Willie, the lad who whilom made the rocks
 To ring with joy, whilst on his pipe he played,
 And from their masters wooed the neighb’ring flocks :

But now o'ercome with dolours deep
That nigh his heart-strings rent,
Ne cared he for his silly sheep,
Ne cared for merriment.

But changed his wonted walks
For uncouth paths unknown,
Where none but trees might hear his plaints,
And echo rue his moan.

Autumn it was when drooped the sweetest flowers,
And rivers, swollen with pride, o'erlooked the banks ;
Poor grew the day of summer's golden hours,
And void of sap stood Ida's cedar-ranks.

The pleasant meadows sadly lay
In chill and cooling sweats
By rising fountains, or as they
Feared winter's wasteful threats.

Against the broad-spread oak,
Each wind in fury bears ;
Yet fell their leaves not half so fast
As did the shepherd's tears.

As was his seat, so was his gentle heart,
Meek and dejected, but his thoughts as high
As those aye-wandering lights, who both impart
Their beams on us, and heaven still beautify.

Sad was his look (O, heavy fate!
That swain should be so sad,
Whose merry notes the forlorn mate
With greatest pleasure clad,)

Broke was his tuneful pipe
That charmed the crystal floods,
And thus his grief took airy wings,
And flew about the woods.

Day, thou art too officious in thy place,
And night too sparing of a wishèd stay.
Ye wandering lamps, O be ye fixed a space !
Some other hemisphere grace with your ray.

Great Phoebus! Daphne is not here,
 Nor Hyacinthus fair;
 Phoebe! Endymion, and thy dear
 Hath long since cleft the air.
 But ye hath surely seen
 (Whom we in sorrow miss)
 A swain whom Phoebe thought her love,
 And Titan deemèd his.

But he is gone; then inwards turn your light,
 Behold him there; here never shall you more;
 O'erhang this sad plain with eternal night;
 Or change the gaudy green she whilom wore
 To fenny black! Hyperion great
 To ashy paleness turn her!
 Green well befits a lover's heat,
 But black beseems a mourner.
 Yet neither this thou canst,
 Nor see his second birth,
 His brightness blinds thine eye more now,
 Than thine did his on earth.

Let not a shepherd on our hapless plains
 Tune notes of glee, as usèd were of yore!
 For Philarete is dead. Let mirthful strains
 With Philarete cease for evermore!

And if a fellow-swain do live
 A niggard of his tears,
 The shepherdesses all will give
 To store him part of theirs.
 Or I would lend him some,
 But that the store I have
 Will all be spent before I pay
 The debt I owe his grave.

O what is left can make me leave to moan,
 Or what remains but doth increase it more?
 Look on his sheep: alas! their master's gone.
 Look on the place where we two heretofore

With lockèd arms have vowed our love,
 (Our love which time shall see
In shepherds' songs for ever move,
 And grace their harmony,)

It solitary seems.

Behold our flowery beds ;
Their beauties fade, and violets
For sorrow hang their heads.

'Tis not a cypress' bough, a countenance sad,
A mourning garment, wailing elegy,
A standing hearse in sable vesture clad,
A tomb built to his name's eternity,
 Although the shepherds all should strive
 By yearly obsequies,
And vow to keep thy fame alive
 In spite of destinies,
That can suppress my grief :
 All these and more may be,
Yet all in vain to recompense
 My greatest loss of thee.

Cypress may fade, the countenance be changed,
A garment rot, an elegy forgotten,
A hearse 'mongst irreligious rites be ranged,
A tomb plucked down, or else through age be rotten :
 All things th' impartial hand of Fate
 Can raze out with a thought,
These have a several fixèd date
 Which ended, turn to nought.

Yet shall my truest cause
Of sorrow firmly stay,
When these effects the wings of Time
Shall fan and sweep away.

Look as a sweet rose fairly budding forth,
Bewrays her beauties to the enamoured morn,
Until some keen blast from the envious North
Kills the sweet bud that was but newly born ;

Or else her rarest smells delighting
Make her herself betray,
Some white and curious hand inviting
To pluck her thence away :
So stands my mournful case,
For had he been less good,
He yet (uncropped) had kept the stock
Whereon he fairly stood.

Yet though so long he lived not as he might,
He had the time appointed to him given.
Who liveth but the space of one poor night,
His birth, his youth, his age is in that even.
Who ever doth the period see,
Of days by Heaven forth plotted,
Dies full of age, as well as he
That had more years allotted.
In sad tones then my verse
Shall with incessant tears
Bemoan my hapless loss of him,
And not his want of years.

In deepest passions of my grief-swollen breast
(Sweet soul!) this only comfort seizeth me,
That so few years did make thee so much blest,
And gave such wings to reach eternity.
Is this to die? No : as a ship,
Well built, with easy wind,
A lazy hulk doth far outstrip,
And soonest harbour find :
So Philarete fled,
Quick was his passage given,
When others must have longer time
To make them fit for heaven.

Then not for thee these briny tears are spent,
But, as the nightingale against the breer,
'Tis for myself I moan, and do lament
Not that thou left'st the world, but left'st me here :

Here, where without thee all delights
Fail of their pleasing power,
All glorious days seem ugly nights;
Methinks no April shower
Embroider should the earth,
But briny tears distil,
Since Flora's beauties shall no more
Be honoured by thy quill.

And ye his sheep (in token of his lack),
Whilom the fairest flock on all the plain,
Yean never lamb, but be it clothed in black:
Ye shady sycamores, when any swain
To carve his name upon your rind
Doth come, where his doth stand,
Shed drops, if he be so unkind
To raze it with his hand.
And thou, my lovèd Muse,
No more shouldst numbers move,
But that his name should ever live,
And after death my love.

This said, he sighed, and with o'erdrownèd eyes
Gazed at the heavens for what he missed on earth,
Then from the ground full sadly 'gan arise
As far from future hope as present mirth;
Unto his cote with heavy pace
As ever sorrow trod
He went with mind no more to trace
Where mirthful swains abode;
And as he spent the day,
The night he passed alone.
Was never shepherd loved more dear,
Nor made a truer moan.

William Browne,
1591—1643 ?

LYCIDAS

[*“Obsequies to the memorie of Mr. Edward King,
Anno Dom. 1638.”*]

Yet once more, O ye laurels! and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere, ✓
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, Sisters, of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse,
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westerling wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute;
Tempered to the oaten flute,
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel

From the glad sound would not be absent long,
And old Damoetas loved to hear our song.

But oh! the heavy change now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn.

The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen,
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me! I fondly dream

"Had ye been there," . . . for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days;

But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears ;
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistening foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove ;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood.

But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea
That came in Neptune's plea.

He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings,
That blows from off each beakèd promontory.
They knew not of his story ;

And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed ;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.

It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
"Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean Lake ;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain

(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake :—
“How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as, for their bellies’ sake
Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold !
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearer’s feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths ! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdsman’s art belongs !
What recks it then ? What need they ? They are sped ;
And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw ;
The hungry sheep look up and are not fed,
But swollen with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread :
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.”

Return, Alpheus ; the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams ; return, Sicilian muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears :

Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so, to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise,
Ah me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou, perhaps, under the whelming tide,
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded mount
Looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold;
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,

While the still morn went out with sandals grey ;
 He touched the tender stops of various quills,
 With eager thought warbling his Doric lay ;
 And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
 And now was dropped into the western bay ;
 At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:
 To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

John Milton,
 1608—1674.



PRISONED IN WINDSOR

He recounteth his pleasure there passed.

[Songes and Sonettes written by the ryght honorable Lorde Henry Howard, late Earle of Surrey, and other. Apud Richardum Tottel, 1557.]

So cruel prison how could betide, alas,
 As proud Windsor? where I, in lust and joy,
 With a King's son, my childish years did pass,
 In greater feast than Priam's sons of Troy.
 Where each sweet place returns a taste full sour.
 The large green courts, where we were wont to hove,*
 With eyes cast up into the Maiden's tower,
 And easy sighs, such as folk draw in love.
 The stately seats, the ladies bright of hue.
 The dances short, long tales of great delight ;
 With words and looks that tigers could but rue ;
 Where each of us did plead the other's right.
 The palme-play,† where, despoiled for the game,
 With dazed eyes, oft we by gleams of love
 Have missed the ball, and got sight of our dame,
 To bait her eyes, which kept the leads above.
 The gravelled ground, with sleeves tied on the helm,
 On foaming horse, with swords and friendly hearts ;
 With chere, as though one should another whelm,
 Where we have fought, and chasèd oft with darts.

* hover.

† tennis.

With silver drops the mead yet spread for ruth,
In active games of nimbleness and strength,
Where we did strain, trained with swarms of youth,
Our tender limbs, that yet shot up in length.
The secret groves, which oft we made resound
Of pleasant plaint, and of our ladies' praise;
Recording oft what grace each one had found,
What hope of speed, what dread of long delays.
The wild forest, the clothèd holts with green:
With reins availed, and swift-y-breathèd horse,
With cry of hounds, and merry blasts between,
Where we did chase the fearful hart of force.
The wide vales eke, that harboured us each night.
Wherewith, alas! reviveth in my breast
The sweet accord: such sleeps us yet delight;
The pleasant dreams, the quiet bed of rest;
The secret thoughts, imparted with such trust;
The wanton talk, the divers change of play;
The friendship sworn, each promise kept so just,
Wherewith we passed the winter night away.
And with this thought the blood forsakes the face;
The tears berain my cheeks of deadly hue;
The which, as soon as sobbing sighs, alas!
Up-supped have, thus I my plaint renew:
"O place of bliss! renewer of my woes!
Give me account, where is my noble fere? *
Whom in thy walls thou dost each night enclose;
To other lief; but unto me most dear?"
Echo alas! that doth my sorrow rue,
Returns thereto a hollow sound of plaint.
Thus I alone, where all my freedom grew,
In prison pine, with bondage and restraint:
And with remembrance of the greater grief,
To banish the less, I find my chief relief.

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey,
1517?—1547.

* companion.

ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD WEST

[First published in "Mason's Life and Letters of Gray," 1775.]

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
 And reddening Phoebus lifts his golden fire :
 The birds in vain their amorous descant join :
 Or cheerful fields resume their green attire :
 These ears, alas ! for other notes repine,
 A different object do these eyes require ;
 My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine ;
 And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
 Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
 And new-born pleasure brings to happier men :
 The fields to all their wonted tribute bear ;
 To warm their little loves the birds complain :
 I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
 And weep the more because I weep in vain.

Thomas Gray,
 1716—1771.

THYRSIS

A Monody, to commemorate the author's friend, Arthur
 Hugh Clough, who died at Florence, 1861.

[First printed in Macmillan's Magazine, April 1866.]

How changed is here each spot man makes or fills !
 In the two Hinkseys nothing keeps the same ;
 The village-street its haunted mansion lacks,
 And from the sign is gone Sibylla's name,
 And from the roofs the twisted chimney-stacks—
 Are ye too changed, ye hills ?
 See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men
 To-night from Oxford up your pathway strays !
 Here came I often, often, in old days—
 Thyrsis and I ; we still had Thyrsis then.

Runs it not here, the track by Childsworth Farm,
Past the high wood, to where the elm-tree crowns
The hill behind whose ridge the sunset flames?
The signal elm, that looks on Ilsley Downs,
The Vale, the three lone weirs, the youthful Thames?—
This winter-eve is warm,
Humid the air! leafless, yet soft as spring,
The tender purple spray on copse and briers!
And that sweet city with her dreaming spires,
She needs not June for beauty's heightening.

Lovely all times she lies, lovely to-night!
Only, methinks, some loss of habit's power
Befalls me wandering through this upland dim.
Once passed I blindfold here, at any hour;
Now seldom come I, since I came with him.
That single elm-tree bright
Against the west—I miss it! is it gone?
We prized it dearly; while it stood, we said,
Our friend, the Gipsy-scholar, was not dead;
While the tree lived, he in these fields lived on.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits here,
But once I knew each field, each flower, each stick;
And with the country-folk acquaintance made
By barn in threshing-time, by new-built rick.
Here, too, our shepherd-pipes we first assayed.
Ah me! this many a year
My pipe is lost, my shepherd's-holiday!
Needs must I lose them, needs with heavy heart
Into the world and wave of men depart;
But Thyrsis of his own will went away.

It irked him to be here, he could not rest.
He loved each simple joy the country yields,
He loved his mates; but yet he could not keep,
For that a shadow loured on the fields,
Here with the shepherds and the silly sheep.

Some life of men unblest
He knew, which made him droop, and filled his head.
He went; his piping took a troubled sound
Of storms that rage outside our happy ground;
He could not wait their passing, he is dead.

So, some tempestuous morn in early June,
When the year's primal burst of bloom is o'er,
Before the roses and the longest day—
When the garden-walks and all the grassy floor
With blossoms red and white of fallen May
And chestnut flowers are strewn—
So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry,
From the wet field, through the vext garden-trees,
Come with the volleying rain and tossing breeze:
The bloom is gone, and with the bloom go I!

Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou go?
Soon will the high Midsummer pomps come on,
Soon will the musk carnations break and swell,
Soon shall we have gold-dusted snap dragon,
Sweet-William with his homely cottage-smell,
And stocks in fragrant blow;
Roses that down the alleys shine afar,
And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,
And groups under the dreaming garden-trees,
And the full moon, and the white evening-star.

He hearkens not! light comer, he is flown!
What matters it? next year he will return,
And we shall have him in the sweet spring-days,
With whitening hedges, and uncrumpling fern,
And blue-bells trembling by the forest-ways,
And scent of hay new-mown.
But Thyrsis never more we swains shall see;
See him come back, and cut a smoother reed,
And blow a strain the world at last shall heed—
For Time, not Corydon, hath conquered thee!

Alack, for Corydon no rival now!—

But when Sicilian shepherds lost a mate,
Some good survivor with his flute would go,
Piping a ditty sad for a Bion's fate;
And cross the unpermitted ferry's flow,
And relax Pluto's brow,
And make leap up with joy the beauteous head
Of Proserpine, among whose crowned hair
Are flowers first opened on Sicilian air,
And flute his friend, like Orpheus, from the dead.

O easy access to the hearer's grace

When Dorian shepherds sang to Proserpine!
For she herself had trod Sicilian fields,
She knew the Dorian water's gush divine,
She knew each lily white which Enna yields,
Each rose with blushing face;
She loved the Dorian pipe, the Dorian strain.
But ah, of our poor Thames she never heard!
Her foot the Cumner cowslips never stirred;
And we should tease her with our plaint in vain!

Well! wind-dispersed and vain the words will be,
Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its hour
In the old haunt, and find our tree-topped hill!
Who, if not I, for questing here hath power?
I know the wood which hides the daffodil,
I know the Fyfield tree,
I know what white, what purple fritillaries
The grassy harvest of the river-fields
Above by Ensham, down by Sandford, yields,
And what sedged brooks are Thames's tributaries;

I know these slopes; who knows them if not I?—
But many a dingle on the loved hill-side,
With thorns once studded, old, white-blossomed trees,
Where thick the cowslips grew, and far descried
High towered the spikes of purple orchises,

Hath since our day put by
The coronals of that forgotten time ;
Down each green bank hath gone the ploughboy's team,
And only in the hidden brookside gleam
Primroses, orphans of the flowery prime.

Where is the girl, who by the boatman's door,
Above the locks, above the boating throng,
Unmoored our skiff when through the Wytham flats,
Red loosestrife and blond meadow-sweet among
And darting swallows and light water-gnats,
We tracked the shy Thames shore ?
Where are the mowers, who, as the tiny swell
Of our boat passing heaved the river-grass,
Stood with suspended scythe to see us pass?—
They all are gone, and thou art gone as well !

Yes, thou art gone ! and round me too the night
In ever-nearing circle weaves her shade.
I see her veil draw soft across the day,
I feel her slowly chilling breath invade
The cheek grown thin, the brown hair sprent with grey ;
I feel her finger light
Laid pausefully upon life's headlong train ;—
The foot less prompt to meet the morning dew,
The heart less bounding at emotion new,
And hope, once crushed, less quick to spring again.

And long the way appears, which seemed so short
To the less practised eye of sanguine youth ;
And high the mountain-tops, in cloudy air,
The mountain-tops where is the throne of Truth,
Tops in life's morning-sun so bright and bare !
Unbreachable the fort
Of the long-battered world uplifts its wall ;
And strange and vain the earthly turmoil grows,
And near and real the charm of thy repose,
And night as welcome as a friend would fall.

But hush ! the upland hath a sudden loss
Of quiet !—Look, adown the dusk hillside,
A troop of Oxford hunters going home,
As in old days, jovial and talking, ride !
From hunting with the Berkshire hounds they come.
Quick ! let me fly, and cross
Into yon farther field !—'Tis done ; and see,
Backed by the sunset, which doth glorify
The orange and pale violet evening-sky,
Bare on its lonely ridge, the Tree ! the Tree !

I take the omen ! Eve lets down her veil,
The white fog creeps from bush to bush about,
The west unflushes, the high stars grow bright,
And in the scattered farms the lights come out.
I cannot reach the signal-tree to-night,
Yet, happy omen, hail !
Hear it from thy broad lucent Arno-vale
(For there thine earth-forgetting eyelids keep
The morningless and unawakening sleep
Under the flowery oleanders pale),

Hear it, O Thyrsis, still our tree is there !
Ah, vain ! These English fields, this upland dim,
These brambles pale with mist engarlanded,
That lone, sky-pointing tree, are not for him ;
To a boon southern country he is fled,
And now in happier air,
Wandering with the great Mother's train divine
(And purer or more subtle soul than thee,
I trow, the mighty Mother doth not see)
Within a folding of the Apennine,

Thou hearest the immortal chants of old !—
Putting his sickle to the perilous grain
In the hot cornfield of the Phrygian King,
For thee the Lityrses-song again
Young Daphnis with his silver voice doth sing ;

Sings his Sicilian fold,
His sheep, his hapless love, his blinded eyes—
And how a call celestial round him rang,
And heaven-ward from the fountain-brink he sprang,
And all the marvel of the golden skies.

There thou art gone, and me thou leavest here
Sole in these fields! yet will I not despair.
Despair I will not, while I yet descry
'Neath the mild canopy of English air
That lonely tree against the western sky.
Still, still these slopes, 'tis clear,
Our Gipsy-Scholar haunts, out-living thee!
Fields where soft sheep from cages pull the hay,
Woods with anemonies in flower till May,
Know him a wanderer still; then why not me?

A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,
Shy to illumine; and I seek it too.
This does not come with houses or with gold,
With place, with honour, and a flattering crew;
'Tis not in the world's market bought and sold—
But the smooth-slipping weeks
Drop by, and leave its seeker still untired;
Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,
He wends unfollowed, he must house alone;
Yet on he fares, by his own heart inspired.

Thou too, O Thyrsis, on like quest wast bound!
Thou wanderedst with me for a little hour!
Men gave thee nothing; but this happy quest,
If men esteemed thee feeble, gave thee power,
If men procured thee trouble, gave thee rest.
And this rude Cumner ground,
Its fir-topped Hurst, its farms, its quiet fields,
Here cam'st thou in thy jocund youthful time,
Here was thine height of strength, thy golden prime!
And still the haunt beloved a virtue yields.

What though the music of thy rustic flute
 Kept not for long its happy, country tone ;
 Lost it too soon, and learnt a stormy note
 Of men contention-tost, of men who groan,
 Which tasked thy pipe too sore, and tired thy throat—
 It failed, and thou wast mute !
 Yet hadst thou alway visions of our light,
 And long with men of care thou couldst not stay,
 And soon thy foot resumed its wandering way,
 Left human haunt, and on alone till night.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits here !
 'Mid city-noise, not, as with thee of yore,
 Thyrsis ! in reach of sheep-bells is my home.
 —Then through the great town's harsh, heart-wearying
 roar,
 Let in thy voice a whisper often come,
 To chase fatigue and fear !
Why faintest thou ? I wandered till I died.
Roam on ! The light we sought is shining still.
Dost thou ask proof ? Our tree yet crowns the hill,
Our Scholar travels yet the loved hillside.

Matthew Arnold,
 1822—1888.

ON THE DEATH OF MR WILLIAM HERVEY

[*First printed in "Poems," 1656, folio.*]

It was a dismal and a fearful night,
 Scarce could the morn drive on the unwilling light,
 When sleep, death's image, left my troubled breast,
 By something liker death possessed.
 My eyes with tears did uncommanded flow,
 And on my soul hung the dull weight
 Of some intolerable fate.
 What bell was that ? Ah me ! too much I know.

My sweet companion, and my gentle peer,
Why hast thou left me thus unkindly here,
Thy end for ever, and my life, to moan?
O, thou hast left me all alone!
Thy soul and body, when Death's agony
Besieged around thy noble heart,
Did not with more reluctance part,
Than I, my dearest friend! do part from thee.

My dearest friend, would I had died for thee!
Life and this world henceforth will tedious be.
Nor shall I know hereafter what to do,
If once my griefs prove tedious too.
Silent and sad I walk about all day,
As sullen ghosts stalk speechless by
Where their hid treasures lie;
Alas! my treasure's gone! why do I stay?

He was my friend, the truest friend on earth;
A strong and mighty influence joined our birth;
Nor did we envy the most sounding name
By friendship given of old to fame.
None but his brethren he and sisters knew
Whom the kind youth preferred to me;
And even in that we did agree,
For much above myself I loved them too.

Say, for you saw us, ye immortal lights,
How oft unwearied have we spent the nights,
Till the Ledaean stars, so famed for love,
Wondered at us from above!
We spent them not in toys, in lusts, or wine;
But search of deep Philosophy,
Wit, Eloquence, and Poetry,
Arts which I loved, for they my friend were thine.

Ye fields of Cambridge, our dear Cambridge, say
Have ye not seen us walking every day?

Was there a tree about which did not know
The love betwixt us two?
Henceforth, ye gentle trees for ever fade;
Or your sad branches thicker join,
And into darksome shades combine,
Dark as the grave wherein my friend is laid!

Henceforth, no learned youths beneath you sing,
Till all the tuneful birds to your boughs they bring;
No tuneful birds play with their wonted cheer,
And call the learned youths to hear;
No whistling winds through the glad branches fly:
But all, with sad solemnity,
Mute and unmoved be,
Mute as the grave wherein my friend does lie.

To him my Muse made haste with every strain,
Whilst it was new and warm yet from the brain:
He loved my worthless rhymes, and, like a friend,
Would find out something to commend.
Hence now, my Muse! thou canst not me delight:
Be this my latest verse,
With which I now adorn his hearse;
And this my grief, without thy help, shall write.

Had I a wreath of bays about my brow,
I should condemn that flourishing honour now;
Condemn it to the fire, and joy to hear
It rage and crackle there.
Instead of bays, crown with sad cypress me;
Cypress, which tombs does beautify:
Not Phoebus grieved so much as I,
For him who first was made that mournful tree.

Large was his soul: as large a soul as e'er
Submitted to inform a body here;
High as the place 'twas shortly in heaven to have,
But low and humble as his grave:

So high that all the virtues there did come,
As to their chiefest seat
Conspicuous and great :
So low, that for me too it made a room.

He scorned this busy world below, and all
That we, mistaken mortals ! pleasure call ;
Was filled with innocent gallantry and truth,
Triumphant o'er the sins of youth.
He, like the stars, to which he now is gone,
That shine with beams like flame,
Yet burn not with the same,
Had all the light of youth, of the fire none.

Knowledge he only sought, and so soon caught,
As if for him knowledge had rather sought :
Nor did more learning ever crowded lie
In such a short mortality.
Whene'er the skilful youth discoursed or writ,
Still did the notions throng
About his eloquent tongue,
Nor could his ink flow faster than his wit.

So strong a wit did Nature to him frame,
As all things but his judgment overcame ;
His judgment like the heavenly moon did show,
Tempering that mighty sea below.
Oh ! had he lived in Learning's world, what bound
Would have been able to control
His overpowering soul !
We've lost in him arts that not yet are found.

His mirth was the pure spirits of various wit,
Yet never did his God or friends forget ;
And, when deep talk and wisdom came in view,
Retired and gave to them their due :
For the rich help of books he always took,
Though his own searching mind before
Was so with notions written o'er
As if wise Nature had made that her book.

So many virtues joined in him, as we
Can scarce pick here and there in history ;
More than old writers' practice e'er could reach ;
As much as they could ever teach.
These did Religion, Queen of Virtues ! sway :
And all their sacred motions steer,
Just like the first and highest sphere,
Which wheels about, and turns all heaven one way.

With as much zeal, devotion, piety,
He always lived, as other saints do die.
Still with his soul severe account he kept,
Weeping all debts out ere he slept :
Then down in peace and innocence he lay,
Like the sun's laborious light,
Which still in water sets at night,
Unsullied with his journey of the day.

Wondrous young man ! why wert thou made so good,
To be snatched hence ere better understood ?
Snatched before half of thee enough was seen !
Thou ripe, and yet thy life but green !
Nor could thy friends take their last sad farewell ;
But danger and infectious death
Maliciously seized on that breath
Where life, spirit, pleasure, always used to dwell.

But happy thou, ta'en from this frantic age,
Where ignorance and hypocrisy does rage !
A fitter time for heaven no soul ere chose,
The place now only free from those.
There 'mong the blest thou dost for ever shine,
And wheresoe'er thou cast'st thy view,
Upon that white and radiant crew,
Seest not a soul clothed with more light than thine.

And if the glorious saints cease not to know
Their wretched friends who fight with life below,

Thy flame to me does still the same abide,
 Only more pure and rarified.
 There, whilst immortal hymns thou dost rehearse,
 Thou dost with holy pity see
 Our dull and earthly poesy,
 Where grief and misery can be joined with verse.

Abraham Cowley,
 1618—1667.



LINES ON ADDISON

To the Right Honourable the Earl of Warwick

[*First printed in Tickell's Preface to Addison's Works, 1722.*]

If, dumb too long, the drooping Muse hath stayed,
 And left her debt to Addison unpaid :
 Blame not her silence, Warwick, but bemoan,
 And judge, oh, judge, my bosom by your own.
 What mourner ever felt poetic fires !
 Slow comes the verse that real woe inspires :
 Grief unaffected suits but ill with art,
 Or flowing numbers with a bleeding heart.

Can I forget the dismal night, that gave
 My soul's best part for ever to the grave !
 How silent did his old companions tread,
 By midnight lamps, the mansions of the dead,
 Through breathing statues, then unheeded things,
 Through rows of warriors, and through walks of kings !
 What awe did the slow solemn knell inspire ;
 The pealing organ, and the pausing choir ;
 The duties by the lawn-robed prelate paid ;
 And the last words, that dust to dust conveyed !
 While speechless o'er thy closing grave we bend,
 Accept these tears, thou dear departed friend !
 Oh, gone for ever, take this long adieu ;
 And sleep in peace, next thy loved Montagu !

To strew fresh laurels, let the task be mine ;
A frequent pilgrim at thy sacred shrine ;
Mine with true sighs thy absence to bemoan,
And grave with faithful epitaphs thy stone.
If e'er from me thy loved memorial part,
May shame afflict this alienated heart ;
Of thee forgetful if I form a song,
My lyre be broken, and untuned my tongue,
My griefs be doubled, from thy image free,
And mirth a torment, unchastised by thee.

Oft let me range the gloomy aisles alone,
(Sad luxury ! to vulgar minds unknown)
Along the walls where speaking marbles show
What worthies form the hallowed mould below :
Proud names, who once the reins of empire held ;
In arms who triumphed or in arts excelled ;
Chiefs, graced with scars, and prodigal of blood ;
Stern patriots, who for sacred freedom stood ;
Just men, by whom impartial laws were given ;
And saints, who taught, and led, the way to heaven.
Ne'er to these chambers, where the mighty rest,
Since their foundation, came a nobler guest ;
Nor e'er was to the bowers of bliss conveyed
A fairer spirit, or more welcome shade.

In what new region, to the just assigned,
What new employments please th' unbodied mind ?
A wingèd virtue, through th' ethereal sky,
From world to world, unwearied does he fly ;
Or curious trace the long laborious maze
Of heaven's decrees, where wondering angels gaze ?
Does he delight to hear bold seraphs tell
How Michael battled, and the Dragon fell ?
Or, mixt with milder Cherubim, to glow
In hymns of love, not ill essayed below ?
Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,
A task well suited to thy gentle mind ?

Oh, if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
To me thy aid, thou guardian Genius, lend!
When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,
When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
In silent whisp'rings purer thoughts impart,
And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more.

That awful form (which, so ye heavens decree,
Must still be loved and still deplored by me)
In nightly visions seldom fails to rise,
Or, roused by fancy, meets my waking eyes.
If business calls, or crowded courts invite,
Th' unblemished statesman seems to strike my sight;
If in the stage I seek to soothe my care,
I meet his soul, which breathes in Cato there:
If pensive to the rural shades I rove,
His shape o'ertakes me in the lonely grove:
'Twas there of Just and Good he reasoned strong,
Cleared some great truth, or raised some serious song;
There patient showed us the wise course to steer,
A candid censor, and a friend severe;
There taught us how to live; and (oh! too high
The price for knowledge) taught us how to die.

Thou hill, whose brow the antique structures grace,
Reared by bold chiefs of Warwick's noble race,
Why, once so loved, whene'er thy bower appears,
O'er my dim eyeballs glance the sudden tears?
How sweet were once thy prospects, fresh and fair,
Thy sloping walks, and unpolluted air!
How sweet the glooms beneath thy aged trees,
Thy noon-tide shadow, and thy evening breeze!
His image thy forsaken bowers restore;
Thy walks and airy prospects charm no more;
No more the summer in thy glooms allay'd,
Thy evening breezes, and thy noon-day shade.

From other ills, however Fortune frowned,
 Some refuge in the Muse's art I found :
 Reluctant now I touch the trembling string ;
 Bereft of him who taught me how to sing ;
 And these sad accents, murmured o'er his urn,
 Betray that absence they attempt to mourn.
 Oh ! must I then (now fresh my bosom bleeds,
 And Craggs in death to Addison succeeds)
 The verse, begun to one lost friend, prolong,
 And weep a second in th' unfinish'd song !

These works divine, which, on his death-bed laid,
 To thee, O Craggs, th' expiring Sage conveyed ;
 Great, but ill-omened, monument of fame ;
 Nor he survived to give, nor thou to claim.
 Swift after him thy social spirit flies,
 And close to his, how soon ! thy coffin lies.
 Blest pair ! whose union future bards shall tell
 In future tongues : each other's boast ! farewell.
 Farewell ! whom join'd in fame, in friendship tried,
 No chance could sever, nor the grave divide.

Thomas Tickell,
 1686—1740.



ON GEORGE TALBOT

[From "*Castara. The Second Edition. Corrected and Augmented. London. Printed by B. A. and T. F. for Will. Cooke, and are to be sold at his shop, neare Furnivals-Inne-Gate in Holburne, 1635, 12mo.*"]

Go stop the swift-winged moments in their flight
 To their yet unknown coast, go hinder night
 From its approach on day, and force day rise
 From the fair East of some bright beauties eyes :
 Else vaunt not the proud miracle of verse.
 It hath no power. For mine from his black hearse
 Redeems not Talbot, who, cold as the breath
 Of winter, confined lies ; silent as death,

Stealing on the Anch'rite, who even wants an ear
To breathe into his soft expiring prayer.
For had thy life been by thy virtues spun
Out to a length, thou hadst out-lived the Sun
And closed the world's great eye : or were not all
Our wonders fiction, from thy funeral
Thou hadst received new life, and lived to be
The conqueror o'er death, inspired by me.
But all we Poets glory in, is vain
And empty triumph : Art cannot regain
One poor hour lost, nor rescue a small fly
By a fool's finger destinate to die.
Live then in thy true life, great soul : for set
At liberty by death thou owest no debt
T' exacting Nature : live, freed from the sport
Of time and fortune in yond' starry court
A glorious Potentate, while we below
But fashion ways to mitigate our woe.
We follow camps, and to our hopes propose
The insulting victor ; not remembering those
Dismembred trunks who gave him victory
By a loathed fate : We covetous Merchants be
And to our aims pretend treasure and sway,
Forgetful of the treasons of the Sea.
The shootings of a wounded conscience
We patiently sustain to serve our sense
With a short pleasure ; so we empire gain
And rule the fate of business, the sad pain
Of action we condemn, and the affright
Which with pale visions still attends our night.
Our joys false apparitions, but our fears
Are certain prophecies. And till our ears
Reach that celestial music, which thine now
So cheerfully receive, we must allow
No comfort to our griefs : from which to be
Exempted, is in death to follow thee.

William Habington,
1605—1654.

ON THE DEATH OF MR ROBERT LEVET

[*First printed in the "Annual Register" for 1783.*]

Condemned to Hope's delusive mine
As on we toil from day to day,
By sudden blasts, or slow decline,
Our social comforts drop away.

Well tried through many a varying year,
See Levett to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of ev'ry friendless name the friend.

Yet still he fills Affection's eye,
Obscurely wise, and coarsely kind :
Nor, lettered Arrogance, deny
Thy praise to merit unrefined.

When fainting nature called for aid,
And hovering death prepared the blow,
His vigorous remedy displayed
The power of art without the show.

In misery's darkest cavern known,
His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless anguish poured his groan,
And lonely want retired to die.

No summons mocked by chill delay,
No petty gain disdained by pride,
The modest wants of every day
The toil of every day supplied.

His virtues walked their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void :
And sure the Eternal Master found
The single talent well employed.

The busy day, the peaceful night
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by ;
His frame was firm, his powers were bright,
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then with no fiery throbbing pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And freed his soul the nearest way.

Samuel Johnson,
1709—1784.

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH- YARD

[“ *An Elegy wrote in a Country Church Yard* 1751.”]

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o’er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds :

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wand’ring near her secret bower
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree’s shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould’ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care :
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke :
How jocund did they drive their team afield !
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure ;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death ?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll ;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear :
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad : nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray ;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply :
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind !

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires :
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who mindful of the unhonoured Dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree ;
Another came : nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he :

The next, with dirges due in sad array
 Slow through the churchway path we saw him borne,—
 Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,
 Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
 A youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown.
 Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
 And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
 Heaven did a recompense as largely send :
 He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,
 He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.

No further seek his merits to disclose,
 Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
 (There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
 The bosom of his Father and his God.

Thomas Gray,
 1716—1771.



TO DAFFODILS

[*Hesperides, or the Works both Humane and Divine of Robert Herrick, Esq.*, 1648.]

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
 You haste away so soon ;
 As yet the early rising sun
 Has not attained his noon.
 Stay, stay
 Until the hasting day
 Has run
 But to the evensong :
 And having prayed together, we
 Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you ;
 We have as short a spring ;
 As quick a growth to meet decay,
 As you or any thing.
 We die,
 As your hours do, and dry
 Away,
 Like to the summer's rain ;
 Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
 Ne'er to be found again.

Robert Herrick,
 1591—1674.



IN OBITUM M.S. X^o MAIJ. 1614

[First printed from Lansdowne MS. 777, in the volume issued by Sir Egerton Brydges, 1815. Mr A. H. Bullen has suggested, in his Introduction to the Edition of Browne's Poems in the Muses Library, that the letters M.S. may stand for Maritae Suae. Browne's first wife appears to have died in 1614.]

May! Be thou never graced with birds that sing,
 Nor Flora's pride!
 In thee all flowers and roses spring,
 Mine only died.

William Browne,
 1591—1643?



AH WHAT AVAILS THE SCEPTRED RACE

[*"Simonidea,"* 1806. *Republished, with corrections, in "Gebir Count Julian, and other Poems* 1831."] *Rose Aylmer, daughter of Henry, fourth Baron Aylmer, died in 1800.*

Ah what avails the sceptred race,
 Ah what the form divine!
 What every virtue, every grace!
 Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.

Walter Savage Landor,
1775—1864.



REQUIESCAT

[From *Poems by Matthew Arnold*, 1853.]

Strew on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound.
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

Matthew Arnold,
1822—1868.

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN
WAYS

[*Lyrical Ballads, with other Poems.* 1800.]

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

William Wordsworth,
1770—1850.



THREE YEARS SHE GREW

[*Lyrical Ballads, with other Poems.* 1800.]

Three years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

“She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn,
Or up the mountain springs ;
And her’s shall be the breathing balm,
And her’s the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

“The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden’s form
By silent sympathy.

“The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

“And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell ;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell.”

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy’s race was run !
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

William Wordsworth,
1770—1850.

A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL

[*Lyrical Ballads, with other Poems.* 1800.]

A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears;
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

William Wordsworth,
1770—1850.



I NEVER SHALL LOVE THE SNOW AGAIN

[*First printed at the Rev. C. H. Daniel's private press in 1893:
reprinted in the Fourth Edition of "The Shorter Poems of
Robert Bridges," 1894.*]

I never shall love the snow again
Since Maurice died:
With corniced drift it blocked the lane,
And sheeted in a desolate plain
The country side.

The trees with silvery rime bedight
Their branches bare.
By day no sun appeared; by night
The hidden moon shed thievish light
In the misty air.

We fed the birds that flew around
In flocks to be fed:
No shelter in holly or brake they found.
The speckled thrush on the frozen ground
Lay frozen and dead.

We skated on stream and pond ; we cut
The crinching snow
To Doric temple or Arctic hut ;
We laughed and sang at nightfall, shut
By the fireside glow.

Yet grudged we our keen delights before
Maurice should come.
We said, In-door or out-of-door
We shall love life for a month or more,
When he is home.

They brought him home ; 'twas two days late
For Christmas day :
Wrapped in white, in solemn state,
A flower in his hand, all still and straight
Our Maurice lay.

And two days ere the year outgave
We laid him low.
The best of us truly were not brave,
When we laid Maurice down in his grave
Under the snow.

Robert Bridges.



OF MY DEAR SON, GERVASE BEAUMONT

[From "*Bosworth-field: with a Taste of the Variety of other Poems, left by Sir John Beaumont, Baronet, deceased*": etc. 1629.]

Can I, who have for others oft compiled
The songs of death, forget my sweetest child,
Which, like a flower crushed, with a blast is dead,
And, ere full time, hangs down his smiling head,
Expecting with clear hope to live anew,
Among the angels fed with heavenly dew ?
We have this sign of joy, that many days,
While on the earth his struggling spirit strays,

The name of Jesus in his mouth contains,
 His only food, his sleep, his ease from pains.
 O may that sound be rooted in my mind,
 Of which in him such strong effect I find.
 Dear Lord, receive my son, whose winning love
 To me was like a friendship, far above
 The course of nature, or his tender age,
 Whose looks could all my bitter griefs assuage.
 Let his pure soul, ordained seven years to be
 In that frail body, which was part of me,
 Remain my pledge in heaven, as sent to show,
 How to this port at every step I go.

Sir John Beaumont,
 1582 or 1583—1627.



QUEM DI DILIGUNT

[From "*Echoes from Theocritus and other Sonnets*," 1885.]

O kiss the almond-blossom on the rod !
 A thing has gone from us that could not stay.
 At least our sad eyes shall not see one day
 All baseness treading where all beauty trod.
 O kiss the almond-blossom on the rod !
 For this our budding Hope is caught away
 From growth that is not other than decay
 To bloom eternal in the halls of God.
 And though of subtler grace we saw no sign,
 No glimmer from the yet unrisen star,—
 Full-orbed he broke upon the choir divine,
 Saint among saints beyond the golden bar,
 Round whose pale brows new lights of glory shine,—
 The aureoles that were not and that are.

Edward Cracroft Lefroy.
 1855—1891.

ON THE APPROACH OF A SISTER'S DEATH

[*The Last Fruit off an Old Tree*, by Walter Savage
Landor, 1853.]

Spirit who risest to eternal day,
O hear me in thy flight!
Detain thee longer on that opening way
I would not if I might.

Methinks a thousand come between us two
Whom thou wouldst rather hear:
Fraternal love thou smilest on; but who
Are they that press more near?

The sorrowful and innocent and wronged
Yea, these are more thy own,
For these wilt thou be pleading seraph-tongued
(How soon!) before the throne.

Walter Savage Landor,
1775—1864.

ON HIS DECEASED WIFE

[*"Poems etc. on Several Occasions. By Mr John Milton:
both English and Latin etc., 1673."* Milton's second wife,
Catharine Woodcock, died 10th February 1658.]

Methought I saw my late espousèd saint
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint.
Mine, as whom washed from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the Old Law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,

Came vested all in white, pure as her mind.
 Her face was veiled ; yet to my fancied sight
 Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined
 So clear as in no face with more delight.
 But, oh ! as to embrace me she inclined,
 I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.
John Milton,
1608—1674.

ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK

The Gift of My Cousin, Ann Bodham

[From "*Poems* : I. *On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture* ;
 II. *The Dog and the Waterlily*. By William Cowper,
of the Inner Temple, Esq., London. Printed for J. Johnson,
in St Paul's Churchyard," 1798.]

Oh, that those lips had language ! Life has passed
 With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
 Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
 The same that oft in childhood solaced me ;
 Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
 "Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away !"
 The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
 (Blest be the art that can immortalise—
 The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
 To quench it !) here shines on me still the same.
 Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
 O welcome guest, though unexpected here !
 Who bidst me honour with an artless song,
 Affectionate, a mother lost so long,
 I will obey, not willingly alone,
 But gladly, as the precept were her own ;
 And, while that face renews my filial grief,
 Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
 Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
 A momentary dream, that thou art she.

My mother ! when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed ?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun ?
Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss ;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile !—It answers—Yes.
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu !
But was it such ?—It was.—Where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more !
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wished, I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived ;
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of *to-morrow*, even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learned, at last, submission to my lot ;
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor ;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapped
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capped,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we called the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession ! But the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.

Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid ;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionary plum ;
The fragrant waters on my cheek bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed :
All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks,
That humour interposed too often makes ;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may ;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.

Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin,
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and smile),
Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart ;—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed)
Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay ;

So thou, with sails how swift ! hast reached the shore,
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar" ;
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchored by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed,—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-tossed,
Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
Yet, oh, the thought that thou art safe, and he !
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth ;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise,—
The son of parents passed into the skies.
And now, farewell !—Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wished is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again ;
To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine ;
And, while the wings of Fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft,—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

William Cowper,
1731—1800.



THE WORLD OF LIGHT

[From "*Silex Scintillans, or Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations*, by Henry Vaughan, *Silurist*. London: Printed by T. W. for H. Blunden at ye Castle in Cornhill, 1650."]

They are all gone into the world of light !
And I alone sit lingering here ;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is dressed,
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days :
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope ! and high Humility,
High as thé heavens above !
These are your walks, and you have showed them me
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous Death ! the jewel of the just,
Shining no where but in the dark ;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust ;
Could man outlook that mark !

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest, may know
At first sight, if the bird be flown ;
But what fair well or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep :
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,
Her captive flames must needs burn there ;
But when the hand that locked her up gives room
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee !
Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective—still—as they pass :
Or else remove me hence unto that hill,
Where I shall need no glass.

Henry Vaughan,
1622—1695.



THE EXEQUY

[*On his wife, who died about the year 1625. The "Exequy" first appears in "Poems, Elegies, Paradoxes, and Sonnets," published anonymously in 1657.*]

Accept, thou Shrine of my dead Saint,
Instead of Dirges this complaint ;
And for sweet flowers to crown thy hearse,
Receive a strew of weeping verse
From thy grieved friend, whom thou might'st see
Quite melted into tears for thee.

Dear loss ! since thy untimely fate,
My task hath been to meditate
On thee, on thee : thou art the book,
The library, whereon I look,
Though almost blind. For thee (loved clay)
I languish out, not live, the day,
Using no other exercise
But what I practise with mine eyes :
By which wet glasses, I find out
How lazily time creeps about
To one that mourns : this, only this,
My exercise and business is :
So I compute the weary hours
With sighs dissolved into showers.
Nor wonder, if my time go thus
Backward and most preposterous ;

Thou hast benighted me ; thy set
This Eve of blackness did beget,
Who wast my day, (though overcast,
Before thou hadst thy Noon-tide past)
And I remember must in tears,
Thou scarce hadst seen so many years
As Day tells hours. By thy clear Sun,
My love and fortune first did run :
But thou wilt never more appear .
Folded within my Hemisphere,
Since both thy light and motion
Like a fled Star is fallen and gone,
And, 'twixt me and my soul's dear wish
The earth now interposèd is,
Which such a strange eclipse doth make,
As ne'er was read in Almanack.

I could allow thee, for a time,
To darken me and my sad clime,
Were it a month, a year, or ten,
I would thy exile live till then ;
And all that space my mirth adjourn,
So thou wouldst promise to return ;
And putting off thy ashy shroud,
At length disperse this sorrow's cloud.
But woe is me ! the longest date
Too narrow is to calculate
These empty hopes : never shall I
Be so much blest as to descry
A glimpse of thee, till that day come,
Which shall the earth to cinders doom,
And a fierce Fever must calcine
The body of this world, like thine,
My Little World ! That fit of fire
Once off, our bodies shall aspire
To our souls' bliss : then we shall rise,
And view ourselves with clearer eyes

In that calm Region, where no night
Can hide us from each other's sight.

Mean time, thou hast her, earth ; much good
May my harm do thee. Since it stood
With Heaven's will, I might not call
Her longer mine,—I give thee all
My short-lived right and interest
In her, whom living I loved best :
With a most free and bounteous grief,
I give thee, what I could not keep.
Be kind to her, and prithee look
Thou write into thy Doomsday book
Each parcel of this Rarity,
Which in thy Casket shrined doth lie :
See that thou make thy reckoning straight,
And yield her back again by weight ;
For thou must audit on thy trust
Each grain and atom of this dust,
As thou wilt answer Him that lent,
Not gave thee, my dear Monument.
So close the ground, and 'bout her shade
Black curtains draw ;—my Bride is laid.

Sleep on, my Love, in thy cold bed,
Never to be disquieted !
My last good-night ! Thou wilt not wake,
Till I thy fate shall overtake :
Till age, or grief, or sickness, must
Marry my body to that dust
It so much loves ; and fill the room
My heart keeps empty in thy Tomb.
Stay for me there ; I will not fail
To meet thee in that hollow Vale :
And think not much of my delay ;
I am already on the way,
And follow thee with all the speed
Desire can make, or sorrows breed.

Each minute is a short degree,
And every hour a step towards thee.
At night, when I betake to rest,
Next morn I rise nearer my West
Of life, almost by eight hours sail
Than when sleep breathed his drowsy gale.

Thus from the Sun my Bottom steers,
And my day's compass downward bears :
Nor labour I to stem the tide,
Through which to thee I swiftly glide.

'Tis true, with shame and grief I yield,
Thou, like the Van, first took'st the field,
And gotten hast the victory,
In thus adventuring to die
Before me, whose more years might crave
A just precedence in the grave.
But hark ! My pulse, like a soft drum,
Beats my approach, tells thee I come ;
And slow howe'er my marches be,
I shall at last sit down by Thee.

The thought of this bids me go on,
And wait my dissolution
With hope and comfort. Dear, (forgive
The crime,) I am content to live
Divided, with but half a heart,
Till we shall meet and never part.

Henry King, Bishop of Chichester,
1592—1669.

AN ELEGY

[*This poem was first printed under the title of Elegeia, by F. G. Waldron, in "A Collection of Miscellaneous Poetry" (1802), from a MS. in his possession, dated 1625, the authorship being assigned to Donne. Dr Grosart reprinted it in his edition of Donne's Poems, and gave it the title of "Lament for his Wife." It is found, however, in Browne's autograph list of his own poems. See Mr Gordon Goodwin's "Poems of William Browne," ii. 348.*]

Is Death so great a gamester, that he throws
Still at the fairest, and must I still lose?
Are we all but as tarriers first begun,
Made and together put to be undone?
Will all the rank of friends, in whom I trust,
Like Sodom's trees yield me no fruit but dust?
Must all I love, as careless sparks that fly
Out of a flint, but show their worth and die?

O, where do my for ever losses tend?
I could already by some buried friend
Count my unhappy years; and should the sun
Leave me in darkness, as her loss hath done,
By those few friends I have yet to entomb,
I might, I fear, account my years to come.
What need our canons then be so precise
In registers for our nativities?
They keep us but in bonds, and strike with fears
Rich parents, till their children be of years;
For should they lose and mourn, they might, as I,
Number their years by every elegy.
These books to sum our days might well have stood
In use with those that lived before the Flood,
When she indeed that forceth me to write,
Should have been born, had Nature done her right;
And at five hundred years been less decayed,
Than now at fifteen is the fairest maid.
But Nature had not her perfection then,
Or being loath for such long-living men,

To spend the treasure which she held most pure,
She gave them women apter to endure ;
Or providently knowing there were more
Countries and islands which she was to store,
Nature was thrifty, and did think it well,
If for some one part each one did excel :
As this for her neat hand, that for her hair,
A third for her sweet eyes, a fourth was fair :
And 'tis approved by him, who could not draw
The Queen of Love till he a hundred saw.
Seldom all beauties met in one, till she,
All other lands else stored, came finally
To people our sweet Isle : and seeing now
Her substance infinite, she 'gan to bow
To lavishness in every nuptial bed,
And she her fairest was that now is dead ;
Dead as a blossom forcèd from the tree,
And if a maiden, fair and good as she,
Tread on thy grave, O let her there profess
Herself for evermore an anchoress.
Let her be deathless ! Let her still be young !
Without this means we have no verse nor tongue
To say how much I loved, or let us see
How great our loss was in the loss of thee.
Or let the purple violet grow there,
And feel no revolution of the year ;
But full of dew with ever-drooping head,
Show how I live, since my best hopes are dead.
Dead ! as the world to virtue. Murd'ers, thieves
Can have their pardons, or at least reprieves.
The sword of Justice hath been often won
By letters from an execution.
Yet vows nor prayers could not keep thee here,
Nor shall I see, the next returning year,
Thee with the roses spring and live again.
Thou'rt lost for ever as a drop of rain
Fall'n in a river ! for as soon I may
Take up that drop, or meet the same at sea,

And know it there, as e'er redeem thee gone,
Or know thee in the grave, when I have one.

O! had that hollow vault, where thou dost lie,
An echo in it, my strong fantasy
Would draw me soon to think her words were thine,
And I would hourly come, and to thy shrine
Talk as I often used to talk with thee,
And frame my words that thou might'st answer me
As when thou liv'd'st: I'd sigh, and say I love,
And thou should'st do so too, till we had moved
With our complaints to tears each marble cell
Of those dead neighbours which about thee dwell.

And when the holy father came to say
His orisons, I'd ask him if the day
Of miracles were past, or whether he
Knew any one whose faith and piety
Could raise the dead; but he would answer, none
Can bring thee back to life; though many one
Our cursed days afford, that dare to thrust
Their hands profane to raise the sacred dust
Of holy saints out of their beds of rest.

Abhorred days! O may there none molest
Thy quiet peace! but in thy ark remain
Untouched, as those the old one did contain,
Till he that can reward thy greatest worth,
Shall send the peaceful Dove to call thee forth.

William Browne,
1591—1643?

ELEGY ON MISTRESS BOULSTRED

[*"Poems by J. D., with Elegies on the Author's Death. 1633."*]

Death I recant, and say, "Unsaid by me,
Whate'er hath slipped, that might diminish thee."
Spiritual treason, atheism 'tis to say
That any can thy summons disobey.

Th' earth's face is but thy table ; there are set
Plants, cattle, men, dishes for death to eat.
In a rude hunger now he millions draws
Into his bloody, or plaguy, or starv'd jaws.
Now he will seem to spare, and doth more waste,
Eating the best first, well preserved to last.
Now wantonly he spoils, and eats us not,
But breaks off friends, and lets us piecemeal rot.
Nor will this earth serve him ; he sinks the deep
Where harmless fish monastic silence keep ;
Who—were Death dead—by roes of living sand
Might sponge that element, and make it land.
He rounds the air, and breaks the hymnic notes
In birds', heaven's choristers, organic throats ;
Which, if they did not die, might seem to be
A tenth rank in the heavenly hierarchy.
O strong and long-lived death, how camest thou in ?
And how without creation didst begin ?
Thou hast, and shalt see dead, before thou diest,
All the four Monarchies, and Antichrist.
How could I think thee nothing, that see now
In all this All nothing else is, but thou ?
Our births and lives, vices and virtues, be
Wasteful consumptions, and degrees of thee.
For we, to live, our bellows wear and breath,
Nor are we mortal, dying, dead, but death,
And though thou be'st, O mighty bird of prey,
So much reclaimed by GOD, that thou must lay
All that thou kill'st at His feet, yet doth He
Reserve but few, and leaves the most to thee.
And of those few now thou hast overthrown
One whom thy blow makes, not ours, nor thine own.
She was more storeys high ; hopeless to come
To her soul, thou hast offered at her lower room.
Her soul and body was a king and court ;
But thou hast both of captain missed and fort.
As houses fall not, though the kings remove,
Bodies of saints rest for their souls above.

Death gets 'twixt souls and bodies such a place
As sin insinuates 'twixt just men and grace;
Both work a separation, no divorce.
Her soul is gone to usher up her corse,
Which shall be almost another soul—for there
Bodies are purer than best souls are here.
Because in her, her virtues did outgo
Her years, would'st thou, O emulous death, do so,
And kill her young to thy loss? must the cost
Of beauty and wit, apt to do harm, be lost?
What though thou found'st her proof 'gainst sins of
youth?
O, every age a diverse sin pursueth.
Thou should'st have stayed, and taken better hold.
Shortly, ambitious; covetous, when old,
She might have proved; and such devotion
Might once have strayed to superstition.
If all her virtues must have grown, yet might
Abundant virtue have bred a proud delight.
Had she persever'd just, there would have been
Some that would sin, misthinking she did sin.
Such as would call her friendship, love, and feign
To sociableness, a name profane,
Or sin by tempting, or, not daring that,
By wishing, though they never told her what.
Thus might'st thou have slain more souls had'st thou
not crossed
Thyself, and to triumph, thine army lost.
Yet though these ways be lost, thou hast left one,
Which is, immoderate grief that she is gone.
But we may 'scape that sin, yet weep as much;
Our tears are due because we are not such.
Some tears, that knot of friends, her death must cost,
Because the chain is broke, but no link lost.

John Donne,
1573—1631.

ELEGY ON MISTRESS BOULSTRED

[*“ Poems by J. D., with Elegies on the Author’s Death. 1635.”*]

Death, be not proud, thy hand gave not this blow ;
Sin was her captive, whence thy power doth flow ;
The executioner of wrath thou art,
But to destroy the just is not thy part.
Thy coming, terror, anguish, grief denounces ;
Her happy state, courage, ease, joy pronounces.
From out the crystal palace of her breast,
The clearer soul was called to endless rest,
—Not by the thundering voice, wherewith GOD threatens,
But as with crowned saints in heaven He treats—
And, waited on by angels, home was brought,
To joy that it through many dangers sought.
The key of mercy gently did unlock
The doors ’twixt heaven and it, when life did knock.
Nor boast the fairest frame was made thy prey,
Because to mortal eyes it did decay.
A better witness than thou art, assures,
That though dissolved, it yet a space endures ;
No dram thereof shall want or loss sustain,
When her best soul inhabits it again.
Go then to people cursed before they were ;
Their souls in triumph to thy conquest bear.
Glory not thou thyself in these hot tears
Which our face, not for her, but our harm wears ;
The mourning livery given by grace, not thee,
Which wills our souls in these streams washed should be ;
And on our hearts, her memory’s best tomb,
In this her epitaph doth write thy doom.
Blind were those eyes, saw not how bright did shine
Through flesh’s misty veil those beams divine ;
Deaf were the ears, not charmed with that sweet sound
Which did i’ th’ spirit’s instructed voice abound ;
Of flint the conscience, did not yield and melt,
At what in her last act it saw and felt.

Weep not, nor grudge then to have lost her sight,
 Taught thus, our after stay's but a short night;
 But by all souls not by corruption choked
 Let in high raised notes that power be invoked,
 Calm the rough seas by which she sails to rest
 From sorrows here to a kingdom ever blest.
 And teach this hymn of her with joy, and sing,
 "The grave no conquest gets, Death hath no sting."

John Donne,
 1573—1631.

ELEGY OVER A TOMB

[From "*Occasional Verses of Edward Lord Herbert, Baron of Cherbury and Castle-Island. Deceased in August, 1648. London. Printed by T. R. for Thomas Dring. 1665.*"]

Must I then see, alas! eternal night
 Sitting upon those fairest eyes,
 And closing all those beams, which once did rise
 So radiant and bright,
 That light and heat in them to us did prove
 Knowledge and Love?

Oh, if you did delight no more to stay
 Upon this low and earthly stage,
 But rather chose an endless heritage,
 Tell us at least, we pray,
 Where all the beauties that those ashes owed
 Are now bestowed?

Doth the Sun now his light with yours renew?
 Have Waves the curling of your hair?
 Did you restore unto the Sky and Air
 The red and white and blue?
 Have you vouchsafed to flowers since your death,
 That sweetest breath?

Had not Heaven's Lights else in their houses slept,
 Or to some private life retired?
 Must not the Sky and Air have else conspired
 And in their Regions wept?
 Must not each flower else the earth could breed
 Have been a weed?

But thus enriched may we not yield some cause
 Why they themselves lament no more,
 That must have changèd course they held before,
 And broke their proper Laws,
 Had not your Beauties given their second birth
 To Heaven and Earth?

Tell us, for Oracles must still ascend
 For those that crave them at your tomb;
 Tell us, where are those Beauties now become,
 And what they now intend;
 Tell us, alas! that cannot tell our grief,
 Or hope relief.

Lord Herbert of Cherbury,
 1583—1648.



To the Immortal Memory of the
 Fairest and Most Virtuous Lady, the
 LADY PENELOPE CLIFTON

[From "*Bosworth-field: with a Taste of the Variety of other poems, left by Sir John Beaumont, Baronet, deceased, set forth by his sonne, Sir John Beaumont, Baronet; and dedicated to the King's most Excellent Maiestie. 1629.*"]

Her tongue hath ceased to speak, which might make dumb:
 All tongues might stay, all pens, all hands benumb:
 Yet I must write: O that it might have been
 While she had lived, and had my verses seen,
 Before sad cries deaf'd my untuned ears,
 When verses flowed more easily than tears.

Ah why neglected I to write her praise,
And paint her virtues in those happy days!
Then my now trembling hand and dazzled eye,
Had seldom failed, having the pattern by;
Or had it erred, or made some strokes amiss,
—For who can portray Virtue as it is?—
Art might with Nature have maintained her strife,
By curious lines to imitate true life.
But now those pictures want their lively grace,
As after death none can well draw the face:
We let our friends pass idly, like our time,
Till they be gone, and then we see our crime,
And think what worth in them might have been known,
What duties done, and what affection shown:
Untimely knowledge, which so dear doth cost,
And then begins when the thing known is lost;
Yet this cold love, this envy, this neglect,
Proclaims us modest, while our due respect
To goodness is restrained by servile fear,
Lest to the world it flattery should appear:
As if the present hours deserved no praise,
But ages passed, whose knowledge only stays
On that weak prop which memory sustains,
Should be the proper subject of our strains:
Or as if foolish men ashamed to sing
Of violets and roses in the Spring,
Should tarry till the flowers were blown away,
And till the Muses' life and heat decay;
Then is the fury slaked, the vigour fled,
As here in mine, since it with her was dead:
Which still may sparkle, but shall flame no more,
Because no time shall her to us restore:
Yet may these sparks, thus kindled with her fame,
Shine brighter and live longer than some flame.
Here expectation urgeth me to tell
Her high perfections, which the world knew well.
But they are far beyond my skill to unfold:
They were poor virtues if they might be told.

But thou, who fain would'st take a general view
Of timely fruits which in this garden grew,
On all the virtues in men's actions look,
Or read their names writ in some moral book ;
And sum the number which thou there shalt find :
So many lived, and triumphed in her mind.
Nor dwelt these Graces in a house obscure,
But in a palace fair which might allure
The wretch who no respect to Virtue bore,
To love it for the garments that it wore.
So that in her the body and the soul
Contended, which should most adorn the whole.
O happy soul for such a body meet,
How are the firm chains of that union sweet,
Dissevered in the twinkling of an eye !
And we amazed dare ask no reason why,
But silent think, that GOD is pleased to show,
That He hath works whose end we cannot know :
Let us then cease to make a vain request,
To learn why die the fairest, why the best ;
For all these things, which mortals hold most dear,
Most slippery are, and yield less joy than fear ;
And being lifted high by men's desire,
Are more perspicuous marks for heavenly fire ;
And are laid prostrate with the first assault,
Because our love makes their desert their fault.
Thou Justice, us to some amends should move
For this our fruitless, nay our hurtful love ;
We in their honour piles of stone erect
With their dear names, and worthy praises decked :
But since those fail, their glories we rehearse,
In better marble, everlasting verse :
By which we gather from consuming hours,
Some parts of them, though Time the rest devours ;
Then if the Muses can forbid to die,
As we their priests suppose, why may not I ?
Although the least and hoarsest in the quire,
Clear beams of blessed immortality inspire

To keep thy blest remembrance ever young,
 Still to be freshly in all ages sung :
 Or if my work in this unable be,
 Yet shall it ever live, upheld by thee :
 For thou shalt live, though poems should decay,
 Since parents teach their sons thy praise to say ;
 And to posterity from hand to hand
 Convey it with their blessing and their land.
 Thy quiet rest from death this good derives ;
 Instead of one, it gives thee many lives :
 While these lines last, thy shadow dwelleth here,
 Thy fame itself extendeth everywhere ;
 In Heaven our hopes have placed thy better part :
 Thine image lives in thy sad husband's heart :
 Who as, when he enjoyed thee, he was chief
 In love and comfort, so is he now in grief.

Sir John Beaumont,
 1582 or 1583—1627.



ON THE MONUMENT OF THE HONOURABLE
 ROBERT DIGBY, AND OF HIS SISTER
 MARY, erected by their father, the Lord Digby, in
 the Church of Sherborne in Dorsetshire, 1727

[*This epitaph first appeared in "Lewis's Miscellany," 1730.*]

Go ! fair example of untainted youth
 Of modest wisdom, and pacific truth :
 Composed in sufferings, and in joy sedate,
 Good without noise, without pretension great.
 Just of thy word, in every thought sincere,
 Who knew no wish but what the world might hear :
 Of softest manners, unaffected mind,
 Lover of peace, and friend of human kind :
 Go live ! for Heaven's eternal year is thine,
 Go, and exalt thy *moral* to *divine*.

And thou, blest maid ! attendant on his doom,
 Pensive hast followed to the silent tomb,
 Steer'd the same course to the same quiet shore,
 Not parted long, and now to part no more !
 Go then, where only bliss sincere is known !
 Go, where to love and to enjoy are one !

Yet take these tears, mortality's relief,
 And till we share your joys, forgive our grief :
 These little rites, a stone, a verse receive ;
 'Tis all a father, all a friend can give !

Alexander Pope,
 1688—1744.



THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE AT CORUNNA

[First printed in the "*Newry Telegraph*," in 1817, with
 the initials, C. W.]

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
 As his corse to the rampart we hurried ;
 Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
 O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
 The sods with our bayonets turning ;
 By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
 And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
 Not in sheet nor in shroud we wound him ;
 But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
 With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
 And we spoke not a word of sorrow ;
 But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
 And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought as we hollowed his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone with his glory.

Charles Wolfe,
1791—1823,



ON THE LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE

Written when the News Arrived

To the March in Scipio

[*First printed by Hayley in "The Life and Posthumous Writings of William Cowper, Esq., with an Introductory Letter to the Right Honourable Earl Cowper. By William Hayley, Esq. 1803."*]

Toll for the brave!
The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

A land-breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset ;
Down went the Royal George,
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave !
Brave Kempenfelt is gone ;
His last sea-fight is fought ;
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle ;
No tempest gave the shock ;
She sprang no fatal leak ;
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath ;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes !
And mingle with our cup
The tear that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again,
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er ;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

William Cowper,
1731—1800.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF
WELLINGTON

[*Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington. By Alfred Tennyson, Poet-Laureate. London: Edward Moxon, 1852.*]

I

Bury the Great Duke

With an empire's lamentation,

Let us bury the Great Duke

To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,

Mourning when their leaders fall,

Warriors carry the warrior's pall,

And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?

Here, in streaming London's central roar.

Let the sound of those he wrought for,

And the feet of those he fought for,

Echo round his bones for evermore.

III

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,

As fits an universal woe,

Let the long, long procession go,

And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,

And let the mournful martial music blow;

The last great Englishman is low.

IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,

Remembering all his greatness in the Past.

No more in soldier fashion will he greet

With lifted hand the gazer in the street.

O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute:

Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,

The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,

Whole in himself, a common good.

Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew !
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V

All is over and done :
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd :
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds :
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd :
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd ;
Thro' the dome of the golden cross ;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss ;

He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom,
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom :
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame ;
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes ;
For this is he,
Was great by land as thou by sea ;
His foes were thine ; he kept us free ;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee ;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun ;
This is he that far away

Against the myriads of Assaye
Clash'd with his fiery few and won ;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs
Of his labour'd rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Beyond the Pyrean pines,
Follow'd up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings ;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down ;
A day of onsets of despair !
Dash'd on every rocky square
Their surging charges foam'd themselves away ;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew ;
Thro' the long-tormented air
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there,
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo !
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,

O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
 If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,
 If love of country move thee there at all,
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine !
 And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
 In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 The proof and echo of all human fame,
 A people's voice, when they rejoice
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
 Eternal honour to his name.

VII

A people's voice ! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers ;
 Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
 His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
 We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and regret
 To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute control ;
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
 Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
 And save the one true seed of freedom sown
 Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
 That sober freedom out of which there springs
 Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ;
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
 And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
 Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
 But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
 Remember him who led your hosts ;
 He bad you guard the sacred coasts.

Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
His voice is silent in your council-hall
For ever; and whatever tempests lour
For ever silent; even if they broke
In thunder, silent; yet remember all
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;
Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow
Thro' either babbling world of high and low;
Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life;
Who never spoke against a foe;
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
All great self-seekers trampling on the right:
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
Truth-lover was our English Duke;
Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be shamed.

VIII

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which out-redden

All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory :
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he : his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand,
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure :
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory :
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long illumined cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not see :
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung :
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain !

More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere;
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane:
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears:
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears:
The black earth yawns; the mortal disappears;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
He is gone who seem'd so great.—
Gone; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,

And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.

1852.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson,
1809—1892.



NELSON, PITT, AND FOX

(From the Introduction to the first Canto of *Marmion*.
Marmion was published on the 23rd of February 1808.)

November's sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sear :
Late, gazing down the steepy linn
That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled green-wood grew,
So feeble trilled the streamlet through :
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Through bush and brier, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with doubled speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

No longer Autumn's glowing red
Upon our forest hills is shed ;
No more, beneath the evening beam,
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam ;
Away hath passed the heather-bell
That bloomed so rich on Needpath-fell ;
Sallow his brow, and russet bare
Are now the sister-heights of Yare.
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
To sheltered dale and down are driven,
Where yet some faded herbage pines,
And yet a watery sunbeam shines :

In meek despondency they eye
The withered sward and wintry sky,
And far beneath their summer hill,
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill :
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,
And wraps him closer from the cold ;
His dogs no merry circles wheel,
But, shivering, follow at his heel ;
A cowering glance they often cast,
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,
As best befits the mountain child,
Feel the sad influence of the hour,
And wail the daisy's vanished flower ;
Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,
And anxious ask,—Will spring return,
And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray ?

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower
Again shall paint your summer bower ;
Again the hawthorn shall supply
The garlands you delight to tie ;
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
The wild birds carol to the round,
And while you frolic light as they,
Too short shall seem the summer day.

To mute and to material things
New life revolving summer brings ;
The genial call dead Nature hears,
And in her glory reappears.
But O my Country's wintry state
What second spring shall renovate ?
What powerful call shall bid arise
The buried warlike and the wise ;
The mind that thought for Britain's weal,
The hand that grasped the victor steel ?

The vernal sun new life bestows
Even on the meanest flower that blows ;
But vainly, vainly may he shine,
Where glory weeps o'er Nelson's shrine ;
And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,
That shrouds, O Pitt, thy hallowed tomb !

Deep graved in every British heart,
O never let those names depart !
Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,
Who victor died on Gadite wave ;
To him, as to the burning levin,
Short, bright, resistless course was given.
Where'er his country's foes were found
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
Rolled, blazed, destroyed—and was no more.

Nor mourn ye less his perished worth,
Who bade the conqueror go forth,
And launched that thunderbolt of war
On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar ;
Who, born to guide such high emprise,
For Britain's weal was early wise ;
Alas ! to whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave !
His worth, who in his mightiest hour
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurned at the sordid lust of pelf,
And served his Albion for herself ;
Who, when the frantic crowd amain
Strained at subjection's bursting rein,
O'er their wild mood full conquest gained,
The pride he would not crush restrained,
Showed their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
And brought the freeman's arm to aid the freeman's
laws.

Hadst thou but lived, though stripped of power,
A watchman on the lonely tower,

Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
When fraud or danger were at hand;
By thee, as by the beacon-light,
Our pilots had kept course aright;
As some proud column, though alone,
Thy strength had propped the tottering throne:
Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon-light is quenched in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill!

O think, how to his latest day,
When death, just hovering, claimed his prey,
With Palinure's unaltered mood,
Firm at his dangerous post he stood;
Each call for needful rest repelled,
With dying hand the rudder held,
Till in his fall with fateful sway,
The steerage of the realm gave way!
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains
One unpolluted church remains,
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
But still, upon the hallowed day,
Convoke the swains to praise and pray;
While faith and civil peace are dear,
Grace this cold marble with a tear,—
He, who preserved them, Pitt, lies here!

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
Because his rival slumbers nigh;
Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.
For talents mourn, untimely lost,
When best employed, and wanted most;
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,
And wit that loved to play, not wound;

And all the reasoning powers divine,
To penetrate, resolve, combine ;
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,—
They sleep with him who sleeps below ;
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save
From error him who owns this grave,
Be every harsher thought suppressed,
And sacred be the last long rest.

Here, where the end of earthly things
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings ;
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung ;
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song,

As if some angel spoke agen,
“ All peace on earth, goodwill to men ” ;
If ever from an English heart,
O, *here* let prejudice depart,
And, partial feeling cast aside,
Record, that Fox a Briton died !
When Europe crouched to France's yoke,
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
And the firm Russian's purpose brave
Was bartered by a timorous slave,
Even then dishonour's peace he spurned,
The sullied olive-branch returned,
Stood for his country's glory fast,
And nailed her colours to the mast !
Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave
A portion in this honoured grave,
And ne'er held marble in its trust
Of two such wondrous men the dust.

With more than mortal powers endowed,
How high they soared above the crowd !
Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for place ;
Like fabled Gods, their mighty war
Shook realms and nations in its jar ;

Beneath each banner proud to stand,
 Looked up the noblest of the land,
 Till through the British world were known
 The names of PITT and FOX alone.
 Spells of such force no wizard grave
 E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
 Though his could drain the ocean dry,
 And force the planets from the sky.
 These spells are spent, and spent with these
 The wine of life is on the lees.
 Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
 For ever tombed beneath the stone,
 Where,—taming thought to human pride!—
 The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
 Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,
 'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;
 O'er Pitt's the mournful requiem sound,
 And Fox's shall the notes rebound.
 The solemn echo seems to cry,—
 "Here let their discord with them die.
 Speak not for those a separate doom,
 Whom Fate made Brothers in the tomb;
 But search the land of living men,
 Where wilt thou find their like agen?"

Walter Scott,
 1771—1832.



MEMORIAL VERSES

(April 1850.)

[From "*Empedocles on Etna, and other Poems.* By A.
 London: B. Fellowes, 1852."]

Goethe in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,
 Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease.
 But one such death remained to come—
 The last poetic voice is dumb—
 We stand to-day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,
We bowed our head and held our breath.
He taught us little ; but our soul
Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.
With shivering heart the strife we saw
Of passion with eternal law ;
And yet with reverential awe
We watched the fount of fiery life
Which served for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we said :
Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.
Physician of the iron age,
Goethe has done his pilgrimage.
He took the suffering human race,
He read each wound, each weakness clear ;
And struck his finger on the place,
And said : *Thou ailest here, and here !*
He looked on Europe's dying hour
Of fitful dream and feverish power ;
His eye plunged down the weltering strife,
The turmoil of expiring life—
He said : *The end is everywhere,*
Art still has truth, take refuge there !
And he was happy, if to know
Causes of things, and far below
His feet to see the lurid flow
Of terror and insane distress,
And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth !—Ah, pale ghosts, rejoice !
For never has such soothing voice
Been to your shadowy world conveyed,
Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come
Through Hades, and the mournful gloom.
Wordsworth has gone from us—and ye,
Ah, may ye feel his voice as we !

He too upon a wintry clime
Had fallen—on this iron time
Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
He found us when the age had bound
Our souls in its benumbing round ;
He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.
He laid us as we lay at birth
On the cool flowery lap of earth,
Smiles broke from us and we had ease ;
The hills were round us, and the breeze
Went o'er the sun-lit fields again ;
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
Our youth returned ; for there was shed
On spirits that had long been dead,
Spirits dried up and closely furled,
The freshness of the early world.

Ah ! since dark days still bring to light
Man's prudence and man's fiery might,
Time may restore us in his course
Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force ;
But where will Europe's latter hour
Again find Wordsworth's healing power ?
Others will teach us how to dare,
And against fear our breast to steel ;
Others will strengthen us to bear—
But who, ah ! who, will make us feel ?
The cloud of mortal destiny,
Others will front it fearlessly—
But who, like him, will put it by ?

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave
O Rotha, with thy living wave !
Sing him thy best ! for few or none
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.

Matthew Arnold,
1822—1888.

LACHRYMAE MUSARUM

[*“Lachrymae Musarum and other Poems, 1893.”*]

(6th October 1892.)

Low, like another's, lies the laurelled head :
The life that seemed a perfect song is o'er :
Carry the last great bard to his last bed.
Land that he loved, thy noblest voice is mute.
Land that he loved, that loved him ! nevermore
Meadow of thine, smooth lawn or wild sea-shore,
Gardens of odorous bloom and tremulous fruit,
Or woodlands old, like Druid couches spread,
The master's feet shall tread.
Death's little rift hath rent the faultless lute :
The singer of undying songs is dead.

Lo, in this season pensive-hued and grave,
While fades and falls the doomed, reluctant leaf
From withered Earth's fantastic coronal,
With wandering sighs of forest and of wave
Mingles the murmur of a people's grief
For him whose leaf shall fade not, neither fall.
He hath fared forth, beyond these suns and showers.
For us, the autumn glow, the autumn flame,
And soon the winter silence shall be ours :
Him the eternal spring of fadeless fame
Crowns with no mortal flowers.

What needs his laurel our ephemeral tears,
To save from visitation of decay ?
Not in this temporal light alone, that bay
Blooms, nor to perishable mundane ears
Sings he with lips of transitory clay.
Rapt though he be from us,
Virgil salutes him, and Theocritus ;
Catullus, mightiest-brained Lucretius, each
Greets him, their brother, on the Stygian beach ;
Proudly a gaunt right hand doth Dante reach ;

Milton and Wordsworth bid him welcome home ;
Keats, on his lips the eternal rose of youth,
Doth in the name of Beauty that is Truth
A kinsman's love beseech ;
Coleridge, his locks aspersed with fairy foam,
Calm Spenser, Chaucer suave,
His equal friendship crave :
And godlike spirits hail him guest, in speech
Of Athens, Florence, Weimar, Stratford, Rome.

He hath returned to regions whence he came.
Him doth the spirit divine
Of universal loveliness reclaim.
All nature is his shrine.
Seek him henceforward in the wind and sea,
In earth's and air's emotion or repose,
In every star's august serenity,
And in the rapture of the flaming rose.
There seek him if ye would not seek in vain,
There, in the rhythm and music of the Whole ;
Yea, and for ever in the human soul
Made stronger and more beauteous by his strain.

For lo ! creation's self is one great choir,
And what is nature's order but the rhyme
Whereto in holiest unanimity,
All things with all things move unfalteringly,
Infolded and communal from their prime ?
Who shall expound the mystery of the lyre ?
In far retreats of elemental mind
Obscurely comes and goes
The imperative breath of song, that as the wind
Is trackless, and oblivious whence it blows.
Demand of lilies wherefore they are white,
Extort her crimson secret from the rose,
But ask not of the Muse that she disclose
The meaning of the riddle of her might :
Somewhat of all things sealed and recondite,

Save the enigma of herself, she knows.
The master could not tell, with all his lore,
Wherefore he sang, or whence the mandate sped :
Ev'n as the linnet sings, so I, he said ;—
Ah, rather as the imperial nightingale,
That held in trance the ancient Attic shore,
And charms the ages with the notes that o'er
All woodland chants immortally prevail !
And now, from our vain plaudits greatly fled,
He with diviner silence dwells instead,
And on no earthly sea with transient roar,
Unto no earthly airs, he trims his sail,
But far beyond our vision and our hail
Is heard for ever and is seen no more.

No more, O never now,
Lord of the lofty and the tranquil brow
Whereon nor snows of time
Have fall'n, nor wintry rime,
Shall men behold thee, sage and mage sublime.
Once, in his youth obscure,
The maker of this verse, which shall endure
By splendour of its theme that cannot die,
Beheld thee eye to eye,
And touched through thee the hand
Of every hero of thy race divine,
Ev'n to the sire of all the laurelled line,
The sightless wanderer on the Ionian strand,
With soul as healthful as the poignant brine,
Wide as his skies, and radiant as his seas,
Starry from haunts of his Familiars nine,
Glorious Mæonides.
Yea, I beheld thee, and behold thee yet :
Thou hast forgotten, but can I forget ?
The accents of thy pure and sovereign tongue,
Are they not ever goldenly impressed
On memory's palimpsest ?
I see the wizard locks like night that hung,

I tread the floor thy hallowing feet have trod ;
 I see the hands a nation's lyre that strung,
 The eyes that looked through life and gazed on God.
 The seasons change, the winds they shift and veer ;
 The grass of yesteryear
 Is dead ; the birds depart, the groves decay :
 Empires dissolve and peoples disappear :
 Song passes not away.
 Captains and conquerors leave a little dust,
 And kings a dubious legend of their reign ;
 The swords of Caesars, they are less than rust :
 The poet doth remain.
 Dead is Augustus, Maro is alive ;
 And thou, the Mantuan of our age and clime,
 Like Virgil shalt thy race and tongue survive,
 Bequeathing no less honeyed words to time,
 Embalmed in amber of eternal rhyme,
 And rich with sweets from every Muse's hive ;
 While to the measure of the cosmic rune
 For purer ears thou shalt thy lyre attune,
 And heed no more the hum of idle praise
 In that great calm our tumults cannot reach,
 Master who crown'st our immelodious days
 With flower of perfect speech.

William Watson.

THE LAST WALK FROM BOAR'S HILL

To A. C. S.

[*"The Coming of Love, and other Poems, 1898."*]

I

One after one they go ; and glade and heath,
 Where once we walked with them, and garden-bowers
 They made so dear, are haunted by the hours
 Once musical of those who sleep beneath ;
 One after one does Sorrow's every wreath

Bind closer you and me with funeral flowers,
And Love and Memory from each loss of ours
Forge conquering glaives to quell the conqueror Death.
Since Love and Memory now refuse to yield
The friend with whom we walk through mead and field
To-day as on that day when last we parted,
Can he be dead, indeed, whatever seem?
Love shapes a presence out of Memory's dream,
A living presence, Jowett golden-hearted.

II

Can he be dead? we walk through flowery ways
From Boar's Hill down to Oxford, fain to know
What nugget gold, in drift of Time's long flow,
The Bodleian mine hath stored from richer days;
He, fresh as on that morn, with sparkling gaze,
Hair bright as sunshine, white as moonlit snow,
Still talks of Plato while the scene below,
Breaks gleaming through the veil of sunlit haze.

Can he be dead? He shares our homeward walk,
And by the river you arrest the talk
To see the sun transfigure ere he sets
The boatmen's children shining in the wherry
And on the floating bridge the ply-rope wets,
Making the clumsy craft an angel's ferry.

III

The river crossed, we walk 'neath glowing skies
Through grass where cattle feed or stand and stare
With burnished coats, glassing the coloured air—
Fading as colour after colour dies:
We pass the copse; we round the leafy rise—
Start many a coney and partridge, hern and hare;

We win the scholar's nest—his simple fare
 Made royal-rich by welcome in his eyes.
 Can he be dead? His heart was drawn to you.
 Ah! well that kindred heart within him knew

The poet's heart of gold that gives the spell!
 Can he be dead? Your heart being drawn to him,
 How shall ev'n Death make that dear presence dim
 For you who loved him—us who loved him well?

Theodore Watts-Dunton.



ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

An Elegy

[*"Robert Louis Stevenson: An Elegy, and other Poems, mainly Personal. 1895."*]

High on his Patmos of the Southern Seas
 Our northern dreamer sleeps,
 Strange stars above him, and above his grave
 Strange leaves and wings their tropic splendours wave,
 While, far beneath, mile after shimmering mile,
 The great Pacific, with its faery deeps,
 Smiles all day long its silken secret smile.

Son of a race nomadic, finding still
 Its home in regions farthest from its home,
 Ranging untired the borders of the world,
 And resting but to roam;
 Loved of his land, and making all his boast
 The birthright of the blood from which he came,
 Heir to those lights that guard the Scottish coast,
 And caring only for a filial fame;
 Proud, if a poet, he was Scotsman most,
 And bore a Scottish name.

Death, that long sought our poet, finds at last,
 Death, that pursued him over land and sea:
 Not his the flight of fear, the heart aghast
 With stony dread of immortality,

He fled "not cowardly";
Fled, as some captain, in whose shaping hand
Lie the momentous fortunes of his land,
Sheds not vainglorious blood upon the field,
But dares to fly—yea! even dares to yield.
Death! why at last he finds his treasure isle,
And he the pirate of its hidden hoard;
Life! 'twas the ship he sailed to seek it in,
And Death is but the pilot come aboard.
Methinks I see him smile a boy's glad smile
On maddened winds and waters, reefs unknown,
As thunders in the sail the dread typhoon,
And in the surf the shuddering timbers groan;
Horror ahead, and Death beside the wheel:
Then—spreading stillness of the broad lagoon,
And lap of waters round the resting keel.

Strange Isle of Voices! must we ask in vain,
In vain beseech and win no answering word,
Save mocking echoes of our lonely pain
From lonely hill and bird?
Island beneath whose unrelenting coast,
As though it never in the sun had been,
The whole world's treasure lieth sunk and lost,
Unsunned, unseen.
For, either sunk beyond the diver's skill,
There, fathoms deep, our gold is all arust,
Or in that island it is hoarded still.
Yea, some have said, within thy dreadful wall
There is a folk that know not death at all,
The loved we lost, the lost we love, are there.
Will no kind voice make answer to our cry,
Give to our aching hearts some little trust,
Show how 'tis good to live, but best to die?
Some voice that knows
Whither the dead man goes:
We hear his music from the other side,
Maybe a little tapping on the door,

A something called, a something sighed—
No more.

O for some voice to valiantly declare
The best news true!

Then, Happy Island of the Happy Dead,
How gladly would we spread
Impatient sail for you!

O vanished loveliness of flowers and faces,
Treasure of hair, and great immortal eyes,
Are there for these no safe and secret places?
And is it true that beauty never dies?
Soldiers and saints, haughty and lovely names,
Women who set the whole wide world in flames,
Poets who sang their passion to the skies,
And lovers wild and wise:

Fought they and prayed for some poor fitting gleam,
Was all they loved and worshipped but a dream?
Is Love a lie and fame indeed a breath,
And is there no sure thing in life—but death?
Or may it be, within that guarded shore,
He meets Her now whom I shall meet no more
Till kind Death fold me 'neath his shadowy wing:
She whom within my heart I softly tell
That he is dead whom once we loved so well,
He, the immortal master whom I sing.

Immortal! yea, dare we the word again,
If aught remaineth of our mortal day,
That which is written—shall it not remain?
That which is sung, is it not built for aye?
Faces must fade, for all their golden looks,
Unless some poet them eternalise,
Make live those golden looks in golden books;
Death, soon or late, will quench the brightest eyes—
'Tis only what is written never dies.
Yea, memories that guard like sacred gold
Some sainted face, they also must grow old,

Pass and forget, and think—or darest thou not!—
On all the beauty that is quite forgot.

Strange craft of words, strange magic of the pen,
Whereby the dead still talk with living men;
Whereby a sentence, in its trivial scope,
May centre all we love and all we hope;
And in a couplet, like a rosebud furled,
Lie all the wistful wonder of the world.
Old are the stars, and yet they still endure,
Old are the flowers, yet never fail the spring:
Why is the song that is so old so new,
Known and yet strange each sweet small shape and hue?
How may a poet thus for ever sing,
Thus build his climbing music sweet and sure,
As builds in stars and flowers the Eternal mind?
Ah, Poet, that is yours to seek and find!
Yea, yours that magisterial skill whereby
God put all Heaven in a woman's eye,
Nature's own mighty and mysterious art
That knows to pack the whole within the part:
The shell that hums the music of the sea,
The little word big with Eternity,
The cosmic rhythm in microcosmic things—
One song the lark and one the planet sings,
One kind heart beating warm in bird and tree—
To hear it beat, who knew so well as he?

Virgil of prose! far distant is the day
When at the mention of your heartfelt name
Shall shake the head, and men, oblivious, say:
"We know him not, this master, nor his fame."
Not for so swift forgetfulness you wrought,
Day upon day, with rapt fastidious pen,
Turning, like precious stones, with anxious thought,
This word and that again and yet again,
Seeking to match its meaning with the world;

Nor to the morning stars gave ears attent,
 That you, indeed, might ever dare to be
 With other praise than immortality
 Unworthily content.

Not while a boy still whistles on the earth,
 Not while a single human heart beats true,
 Not while Love lasts and Honour, and the Brave,
 Has earth a grave,
 O well-beloved, for you!

Richard Le Gallienne.



TO THE BELOVED DEAD

A Lament

[*First printed in "Preludes. By A. C. Thompson. 1875."*]

Beloved, thou art like a tune that idle fingers
 Play on a window-pane.
 The time is there, the form of music lingers;
 But O thou sweetest strain,
 Where is thy soul? Thou liest i' the wind and rain.

Even as to him who plays that idle air,
 It seems a melody,
 For his own soul is full of it, so, my Fair,
 Dead, thou dost live in me,
 And all this lonely soul is full of thee.

Thou song of songs!—not music as before
 Unto the outward ear;
 My spirit sings thee inly evermore,
 Thy falls with tear on tear.
 I fail for thee, thou art too sweet, too dear.

Thou silent song, thou ever voiceless rhyme,
Is there no pulse to move thee
At windy dawn, with a wild heart beating time,
And falling tears above thee,
O music stifled from the ears that love thee?

Oh, for a strain of thee from outer air !
Soul wearies soul, I find.
Of thee, thee, thee, I am mournfully aware,
—Contained in one poor mind
Who wert in tune and time to every wind.

Poor grave, poor lost beloved ! but I burn
For some more vast To be.
As he that played that secret tune may turn
And strike it on a lyre triumphantly,
I wait some future, all a lyre for thee.

Alice Meynell



GEIST'S GRAVE

[*First printed in the Fortnightly Review, Jan. 1881.*]

Four years!—and didst thou stay above
The ground, which hides thee now, but four?
And all that life, and all that love,
Were crowded, Geist ! into no more?

Only four years those winning ways,
Which make me for thy presence yearn,
Call'd us to pet thee or to praise,
Dear little friend ! at every turn?

That loving heart, that patient soul,
Had they indeed no longer span,
To run their course, and reach their goal,
And read their homily to man?

That liquid, melancholy eye,
 From whose pathetic, soul-fed springs
 Seem'd surging the Virgilian cry,*
 The sense of tears in mortal things—

That steadfast, mournful strain, consoled
 By spirits gloriously gay,
 And temper of heroic mould—
 What, was four years their whole short day?

Yes, only four!—and not the course
 Of all the centuries yet to come,
 And not the infinite resource
 Of Nature, with her countless sum

Of figures, with her fulness vast
 Of new creation evermore,
 Can ever quite repeat the past,
 Or just thy little self restore.

Stern law of every mortal lot!
 Which man, proud man, finds hard to bear,
 And builds himself I know not what
 Of second life I know not where.

But thou, when struck thine hour to go,
 On us, who stood despondent by,
 A meek last glance of love didst throw,
 And humbly lay thee down to die.

Yet would we keep thee in our heart—
 Would fix our favourite on the scene,
 Nor let thee utterly depart
 And be as if thou ne'er hadst been.

And so there rise these lines of verse
 On lips that rarely form them now;
 While to each other we rehearse:
Such ways, such arts, such looks hadst thou!

* *Sunt lacrimae rerum!*

We stroke thy broad brown paws again,
We bid thee to thy vacant chair,
We greet thee by the window-pane,
We hear thy scuffle on the stair.

We see the flaps of thy large ears
Quick raised to ask which way we go ;
Crossing the frozen lake, appears
Thy small black figure on the snow !

Nor to us only art thou dear
Who mourn thee in thine English home ;
Thou hast thine absent master's tear,
Dropt by the far Australian foam.

Thy memory lasts both here and there,
And thou shalt live as long as we.
And after that—thou dost not care !
In us was all the world to thee.

Yet, fondly zealous for thy fame,
Even to a date beyond our own
We strive to carry down thy name,
By mounded turf, and graven stone.

We lay thee, close within our reach,
Here, where the grass is smooth and warm,
Between the holly and the beech,
Where oft we watch'd thy couchant form,

Asleep, yet lending half an ear
To travellers on the Portsmouth road ;—
There build we thee, O guardian dear,
Mark'd with a stone, thy last abode !

Then some, who through this garden pass,
When we too, like thyself, are clay,
Shall see thy grave upon the grass,
And stop before the stone, and say :

*People who lived here long ago
 Did by this stone, it seems, intend
 To name for future times to know
 The dachs-hound, Geist, their little friend.*

*Matthew Arnold,
 1822—1888.*



ON A DEAD CHILD

[From "The Shorter Poems of Robert Bridges. 1890."]

Perfect little body, without fault or stain on thee,
 With promise of strength and manhood full and fair!
 Though cold and stark and bare,
 The bloom and the charm of life doth awhile remain on
 thee.

Thy mother's treasure wert thou;—alas! no longer
 To visit her heart with wondrous joy: to be
 Thy father's pride;—ah, he
 Must gather his faith together, and his strength make
 stronger.

To me, as I move thee now in the last duty,
 Dost thou with a turn or gesture anon respond:
 Startling my fancy fond
 With a chance attitude of the head, a freak of beauty.

Thy hand clasps, as 'twas wont, my finger, and holds it:
 But the grasp is the clasp of Death, heartbreaking
 and stiff;

Yet feels to my hand as if
 'Twas still thy will, thy pleasure and trust that enfolds it.

So I lay thee there, thy sunken eyelids closing,—
 Go lie thou there in thy coffin, thy last little bed!—
 Propping thy wise, sad head,
 Thy firm, pale hands across thy chest disposing.

So quiet ! doth the change content thee ?—Death, whither
hath he taken thee ?

To a world, do I think, that rights the disaster of
this ?

The vision of which I miss,
Who weep for the body, and wish but to warm thee
and awaken thee ?

Ah ! little at best can all our hopes avail us
To lift this sorrow, or cheer us, when in the dark,
Unwilling, alone we embark,
And the things we have seen and have known and have
heard of, fail us.

Robert Bridges.



IN A GRAVEYARD

Oliver Madox Brown

November 12, 1874

[“ *The Coming of Love, and other Poems.* 1898.”]

Farewell to thee, and to our dreams farewell—
Dreams of high deeds and golden days of thine,
Where once again should Art's twin powers combine—
The painter's wizard-wand, the poet's spell !
Though death strikes free, careless of Heaven and Hell—
Careless of Man, of Love's most lovely shrine ;
Yet must Man speak—must ask of Heaven a sign
That this wild world is God's, and all is well.
Last night we mourned thee, cursing eyeless Death,
Who, sparing sons of Baal and Ashtoreth,
Must needs slay thee, with all the world to slay ;
But round this grave the winds of winter say :
“ On earth what hath the poet ? An alien breath.
Night holds the keys that ope the doors of Day.”

Theodore Watts-Dunton,

LIGHT: AN EPICEDE

To Philip Bourke Marston

[*"Astrophel, and other poems. By Algernon Charles Swinburne."* 1894.]

Love will not weep because the seal is broken
 That sealed upon a life beloved and brief
 Darkness, and let but song break through for token
 How deep, too far for even thy song's relief,
 Slept in thy soul the secret springs of grief.

Thy song may soothe full many a soul hereafter,
 As tears, if tears will come, dissolve despair;
 As here but late, with smile more bright than laughter,
 Thy sweet strange yearning eyes would seem to bear
 Witness that joy might cleave the clouds of care.

Two days ago, and love was one with pity
 When love gave thought wings toward the glimmer-
 ing goal

Where, as a shrine lit in some darkling city,
 Shone soft the shrouded image of thy soul:
 And now thou art healed of life; thou art healed,
 and whole.

Yea, two days since, all we that loved thee pitied:
 And now with wondering love, with shame of face,
 We think how foolish now, how far unfitted,
 Should be from us, toward thee who hast run thy race,
 Pity—toward thee, who hast won the painless place;

The painless world of death, yet un beholden
 Of eyes that dream what light now lightens thine
 And will not weep. Thought, yearning toward those
 olden

Dear hours that sorrow sees and sees not shine,
 Bows tearless down before a flameless shrine:

A flameless altar here of life and sorrow
 Quenched and consumed together. These were one,
 One thing for thee, as night was one with morrow
 And utter darkness with the sovereign sun:
 And now thou seest life, sorrow, and darkness done.

And yet love yearns again to win thee hither ;
 Blind love, and loveless, and unworthy thee :
 Here where I watch the hours of darkness wither
 Here where mine eyes were glad and sad to see
 Thine that could see not mine, though turned on me.
 But now, if aught beyond sweet sleep lie hidden,
 And sleep be sealed not fast on dead men's sight
 For ever, thine hath grace for ours forbidden,
 And sees us compassed round with change and night :
 Yet light like thine is ours, if love be light.

Algernon Charles Swinburne.



AVE ATQUE VALE

In Memory of Charles Baudelaire

[*"Poems and Ballads. Second Series. By Algernon Charles Swinburne. 1878."*]

*Nous devrions pourtant lui porter quelques fleurs ;
 Les morts, les pauvres morts, ont de grandes douleurs,
 Et quand Octobre souffle, émondeur des vieux arbres,
 Son vent mélancolique à l'entour de leurs marbres,
 Certes, ils doivent trouver les vivants bien ingrats.*
 —*"Les Fleurs du Mal."*

I

Shall I strew on thee rose or rue or laurel,
 Brother, on this that was the veil of thee ?
 Or quiet sea-flower moulded by the sea,
 Or simplest growth of meadow-sweet or sorrel,
 Such as the summer-sleepy Dryads weave,
 Waked up by snow-soft sudden rains at eve ?
 Or wilt thou rather, as on earth before,
 Half-faded fiery blossoms, pale with heat
 And full of bitter summer, but more sweet
 To thee than gleanings of a northern shore
 Trod by no tropic feet ?

II

For always thee the fervid languid glories
Allured of heavier suns in mightier skies ;
Thine ears knew all the wandering watery sighs
Where the sea sobs round Lesbian promontories,
The barren kiss of piteous wave to wave
That knows not where is that Leucadian grave
Which hides too deep the supreme head of song.
Ah, salt and sterile as her kisses were,
The wild sea winds her and the green gulfs bear
Hither and thither, and vex and work her wrong,
Blind gods that cannot spare.

III

Thou sawest, in thine old singing season, brother,
Secrets and sorrows unbeheld of us :
Fierce loves, and lovely leaf-buds poisonous,
Bare to thy subtler eye, but for none other
Blowing by night in some unbreathed-in clime ;
The hidden harvest of luxurious time,
Sin without shape, and pleasure without speech ;
And where strange dreams in a tumultuous sleep
Make the shut eyes of stricken spirits weep ;
And with each face thou sawest the shadow on each,
Seeing as men sow men reap.

IV

O sleepless heart and sombre soul unsleeping,
That were athirst for sleep and no more life
And no more love, for peace and no more strife !
Now the dim gods of death have in their keeping
Spirit and body and all the springs of song,
Is it well now where love can do no wrong,

Where stingless pleasure has no foam or fang
 Behind the unopening closure of her lips?
 Is it not well where soul from body slips
 And flesh from bone divides without a pang
 As dew from flower-bell drips?

V

It is enough ; the end and the beginning
 Are one thing to thee, who art past the end.
 O hand unclasped of unbeholden friend,
 For thee no fruits to pluck, no palms for winning,
 No triumph and no labour and no lust,
 Only dead yew-leaves and a little dust.
 O quiet eyes wherein the light saith nought,
 Whereto the day is dumb, nor any night
 With obscure finger silences your sight,
 Nor in your speech the sudden soul speaks thought,
 Sleep, and have sleep for light.

VI

Now all strange hours and all strange loves are over,
 Dreams and desires and sombre songs and sweet,
 Hast thou found place at the great knees and feet
 Of some pale Titan-woman like a lover,
 Such as thy vision here solicited,
 Under the shadow of her fair vast head,
 The deep division of prodigious breasts,
 The solemn slope of mighty limbs asleep,
 The weight of awful tresses that still keep
 The savour and shade of old-world pine-forests
 Where the wet hill-winds weep?

VII

Hast thou found any likeness for thy vision?
O gardener of strange flowers, what bud, what bloom,
Hast thou found sown, what gathered in the gloom?
What of despair, of rapture, of derision,
What of life is there, what of ill or good?
Are the fruits grey like dust or bright like blood?
Does the dim ground grow any seed of ours,
The faint fields quicken any terrene root,
In low lands where the sun and moon are mute
And all the stars keep silence? Are there flowers
At all, or any fruit?

VIII

Alas, but though my flying song flies after,
O sweet strange elder singer, thy more fleet
Singing, and footprints of thy fleeter feet,
Some dim derision of mysterious laughter
From the blind tongueless warders of the dead,
Some gainless glimpse of Proserpine's veiled head,
Some little sound of unregarded tears
Wept by effaced unprofitable eyes,
And from pale mouths some cadence of dead sighs,
These only, these the hearkening spirit hears,
Sees only such things rise.

IX

Thou art far too far for wings of words to follow,
Far too far off for thought or any prayer
What ails us with thee, who art wind and air?
What ails us gazing where all seen is hollow?
Yet with some fancy, yet with some desire,
Dreams pursue death as winds a flying fire,

Our dreams pursue our dead and do not find.
Still, and more swift than they, the thin flame flies,
The low light fails us in elusive skies,
Still the foiled earnest ear is deaf, and blind
Are still the eluded eyes.

X

Not thee, O never thee, in all time's changes,
Not thee, but this the sound of thy sad soul,
The shadow of thy swift spirit, this shut scroll
I lay my hand on, and not death estranges
My spirit from communion of thy song—
These memories and these melodies that throng
Veiled porches of a Muse funereal—
These I salute, these touch, these clasp and fold
As though a hand were in my hand to hold,
Or through mine ears a mourning musical
Of many mourners rolled.

XI

I among these, I also, in such station
As when the pyre was charred, and piled the sods,
And offering to the dead made, and their gods,
The old mourners had, standing to make libation,
I stand, and to the gods and to the dead
Do reverence without prayer or praise, and shed
Offering to these unknown, the gods of gloom,
And what of honey and spice my seedlands bear,
And what I may of fruits in this chilled air,
And lay, Orestes-like, across the tomb
A curl of severed hair.

XII

But by no hand nor any treason stricken,
Not like the low-lying head of Him, the King,
The flame that made of Troy a ruinous thing,
Thou liest and on this dust no tears could quicken
There fall no tears like theirs that all men hear
Fall tear by sweet imperishable tear
Down the opening leaves of holy poets' pages.
Thee not Orestes, not Electra mourns ;
But bending us-ward with memorial urns
The most high muses that fulfil all ages
Weep, and our God's heart yearns.

XIII

For, sparing of his sacred strength, not often
Among us darkling here the lord of light
Makes manifest his music and his might
In hearts that open and in lips that soften
With the soft flame and heat of songs that shine.
Thy lips indeed he touched with bitter wine,
And nourished them indeed with bitter bread ;
Yet surely from his hand thy soul's food came,
The fire that scarred thy spirit at his flame
Was lighted, and thine hungering heart he fed
Who feeds our hearts with fame.

XIV

Therefore he too now at thy soul's sunseting,
God of all suns and songs, he too bends down
To mix his laurel with thy cypress crown,
And save thy dust from blame and from forgetting.
Therefore he too, seeing all thou wert and art,
Compassionate, with sad and sacred heart,

Mourns thee of many his children the last dead,
And hallows with strange tears and alien sighs
Thine unmelodious mouth and sunless eyes,
And over thine irrevocable head
Sheds light from the under skies.

XV

And one weeps with him in the ways Lethean,
And stains with tears her changing bosom chill ;
That obscure Venus of the hollow hill,
That thing transformed which was the Cytherean,
With lips that lost their Grecian laugh divine
Long since, and face no more called Erycine ;
A ghost, a bitter and luxurious god.
Thee also with fair flesh and singing spell
Did she, a sad and second prey, compel
Into the footless places once more trod,
And shadows hot from hell.

XVI

And now no sacred staff shall break in blossom,
No choral salutation lure to light
A spirit sick with perfume and sweet night
And love's tired eyes and hands and barren bosom.
There is no help for these things ; none to mend,
And none to mar ; not all our songs, O friend,
Will make death clear or make life durable.
Howbeit with rose and ivy and wild vine
And with wild notes about this dust of thine
At least I fill the place where white dreams dwell
And wreathe an unseen shrine.

XVII

Sleep ; and if life was bitter to thee, pardon,
If sweet, give thanks ; thou hast no more to live ;
And to give thanks is good, and to forgive.
Out of the mystic and the mournful garden
Where all day through thine hands in barren braid
Wove the sick flowers of secrecy and shade,
Green buds of sorrow and sin, and remnants grey,
Sweet-smelling, pale with poison, sanguine-hearted,
Passions that sprang from sleep and thoughts that
started,
Shall death not bring us all as thee one day
Among the days departed ?

XVIII

For thee, O now a silent soul, my brother,
Take at my hands this garland, and farewell.
Thin is the leaf, and chill the wintry smell,
And chill the solemn earth, a fateful mother,
With sadder than the Niobeian womb,
And in the hollow of her breasts a tomb.
Content thee, howsoe'er, whose days are done ;
There lies not any troublous thing before,
Nor sight nor sound to war against thee more,
For whom all winds are quiet as the sun,
All waters as the shore.

Algernon Charles Swinburne.

ADONAI8

[*“Adonais: An Elegy on the death of John Keats, Author of Endymion, Hyperion, etc.*

Ἀστὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ἐνὶ ζώοισιν ἑῶς.
 Νῦν δὲ θανὼν λάμπεις ἔσπερος ἐν φθιμένοις. *Plato.* 1821.”]

I

I weep for Adonais—he is dead !
 O, weep for Adonais ! though our tears
 Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head !
 And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
 To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
 And teach them thine own sorrow, say : with me
 Died Adonais ; till the Future dares
 Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
 An echo and a light unto eternity !

II

Where wert thou mighty Mother, when he lay,
 When thy son lay, pierced by the shaft that flies
 In darkness ? Where was lorn Urania
 When Adonais died ? With veiled eyes,
 'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
 She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath,
 Rekindled all the fading melodies,
 With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
 He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of death.

III

O, weep for Adonais—he is dead !
 Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep !
 Yet wherefore ? Quench within their burning bed
 Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep
 Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep ;

For he is gone, where all things wise and fair
Descend ;—oh, dream not that the amorous Deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air ;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our
despair.

IV

Most musical of mourners, weep again !
Lament anew, Urania !—He died,
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride,
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood ; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death ; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth ; the third among the sons of light.

V

Most musical of mourners, weep anew !
Not all to that bright station dared to climb ;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished ; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime ;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road,
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene
abode.

VI

But now, thy youngest, dearest one has perished,
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,
And fed with true love tears, instead of dew ;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew !

Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals nipt before they blew
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste ;
The broken lily lies—the storm is overpast.

VII

To that high Capital, where kingly death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came ; and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal.—Come away !
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof ! while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay ;
Awake him not ! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

VIII

He will awake no more, oh, never more !—
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace
The shadow of white Death, and at the door
Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place ;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law
Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.

IX

O, weep for Adonais !—The quick Dreams,
The passion-wingèd Ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not,—

Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn
their lot

Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

X

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries;
“ Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain.”
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

XI

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;
Another clipt her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

XII

Another Splendour on his mouth alit,
That mouth whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music: the damp death

Quenched its caress upon his icy lips ;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapour, which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and past to its eclipse.

XIII

And others came . . . Desires and Adorations,
Wingèd Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies ;
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp ;—the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

XIV

All he had loved, and moulded into thought,
From shape and hue, and odour, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day ;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

XV

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day ;

Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds ;—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

XVI

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves ; since her delight is flown
For whom should she have waked the sullen year ?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear,
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou Adonais : wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears ; odour, to sighing ruth.

XVII

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain ;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee : the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest !

XVIII

Ah woe is me ! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year ;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone ;
The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear ;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons' bier ;

The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere;
And the green lizard, and the golden snake,
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

XIX

Through wood and stream and field and hill and Ocean
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst,
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on Chaos; in its stream immersed
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst;
Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's delight,
The beauty and the joy of their renewèd might.

XX

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit tender
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath;
Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning?—th' intense atom glows
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

XXI

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we? of what scene,
The actors or spectators? Great and mean

Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.
As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to
sorrow.

XXII

He will awake no more, oh, never more !
“Wake thou,” cried Misery, “childless Mother, rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart’s core,
A wound more fierce than his with tears and sighs.”
And all the Dreams that watched Urania’s eyes,
And all the Echoes whom their sister’s song
Had held in holy silence, cried : “Arise !”
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendour sprung.

XXIII

She rose like an autumnal Night, that springs
Out of the East, and follows wild and drear
The golden Day, which on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania ;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist ; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

XXIV

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,
And human hearts, which to her aery tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where’er they fell :

And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they
Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

XXV

In the death chamber for a moment Death
Shamed by the presence of that living Might
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress
Roused Death: Death rose and smiled, and met her
vain caress.

XXVI

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I have to be as thou now art!
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart!

XXVII

"Oh gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh where was then

Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

XXVIII

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
The vultures to the conqueror's banner true,
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion; how they fled,
When like Apollo, from his golden bow,
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

XXIX

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again;
So is it in the world of living men:
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

XXX

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,

Came, veiling all the lightning of his song
In Sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

XXXI

'Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,
A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

XXXII

A pard-like Spirit beautiful and swift—
A Love in desolation masked;—a Power
Girt round with weakness;—it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow; even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may break.

XXXIII

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,

Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it ; of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart ;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

XXXIV

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears ; well knew that gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own ;
As in the accents of an unknown land,
He sung new sorrow ; sad Urania scanned
The Stranger's mien, and murmured : " Who art thou ? "
He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's—Oh ! that it should
be so !

XXXV

What softer voice is hushed over the dead ?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown ?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan ?
If it be He, who gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed one ;
Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

XXXVI

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh !
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe ?
The nameless worm would now itself disown :
It felt, yet could escape the magic tone

Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

XXXVII

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow:
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as now.

XXXVIII

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.—
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

XXXIX

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life—
'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife

Invulnerable nothings.—We decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

XL

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

XLI

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

XLII

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,

Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own ;
Which wields the world with never wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

XLIII

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely : he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there,
All new successions to the forms they wear ;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear ;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

XLIV

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not ;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

XLV

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him ; Sidney, as he fought

And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose ; and Lucan, by his death approved :
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reprovèd.

XLVI

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
"Thou art become as one of us," they cry,
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent, alone, amid an Heaven of Song.
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"

XLVII

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh come forth
Fond wretch ! and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth ;
As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Sate the void circumference : then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night ;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

XLVIII

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
O, not of him, but of our joy : 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought ;
For such as he can lend,—they borrow not

Glory from those who made the world their prey ;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

XLIX

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness ;
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead,
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

L

And gray walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand ;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilions the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble ; and beneath,
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

LI

Here pause : these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each ; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou ! too surely shalt thou find

Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

LII

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,
If thou would'st be with that which thou dost seek!
Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

LIII

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart?
Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here
They have departed; thou should'st now depart!
A light is past from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whispers near;
'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

LIV

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which through the web of being blindly wove

By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst; now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

LV

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven,
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

Percy Bysshe Shelley,
1792—1822.



IN TIME OF MOURNING

[*Poems and Ballads. Third Series. 1891.*]

'Return,' we dare not as we fain
Would cry from hearts that yearn:
Love dares not bid our dead again
Return.

O hearts that strain and burn
As fires fast fettered burn and strain!
Bow down, lie still, and learn.

The heart that healed all hearts of pain
No funeral rites inurn:
Its echoes, while the stars remain,
Return.

Algernon Charles Swinburne.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

[*"Poems by Alfred Tennyson. In two volumes. London, Edward Moxon. 1842."*]

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead,
Will never come back to me.

Alfred Lord Tennyson,
1809—1892,



THE WORKS OF ANATOLE FRANCE



It has long been a reproach to England that only one volume by ANATOLE FRANCE has been adequately rendered into English; yet outside this country he shares with TOLSTOI the distinction of being the greatest and most daring student of humanity now living.

¶ There have been many difficulties to encounter in completing arrangements for a uniform edition, though perhaps the chief barrier to publication here has been the fact that his writings are not for babes—but for men and the mothers of men. Indeed, some of his Eastern romances are written with biblical candour. “I have sought truth strenuously,” he tells us, “I have met her boldly. I have never turned from her even when she wore an

THE WORKS OF ANATOLE FRANCE

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¶ The translation of these books has been entrusted to such competent French scholars as MR. ALFRED ALLINSON, HON. MAURICE BARING, MR. FREDERIC CHAPMAN, MR. ROBERT B.

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¶ As Anatole Thibault, *dit* Anatole France, is to most English readers merely a name, it will be well to state that he was born in 1844 in the picturesque and inspiring surroundings of an old bookshop on the Quai Voltaire, Paris, kept by his father, Monsieur Thibault, an authority on eighteenth-century history, from whom the boy caught the passion for the principles of the Revolution, while from his mother he was learning to love the ascetic ideals chronicled in the Lives of the Saints. He was schooled with the lovers of old books, missals and manuscripts; he matriculated on the Quais with the old Jewish dealers of curios and *objets d'art*; he graduated in the great university of life and experience. It will be recognised that all his work is permeated by his youthful impressions; he is, in fact, a virtuoso at large.

¶ He has written about thirty volumes of fiction. His first novel was *JOCASTA & THE FAMISHED CAT* (1879). *THE CRIME OF SYLVESTRE BONNARD* appeared in 1881, and had the distinction of being crowned by the French Academy, into which he was received in 1896.

¶ His work is illuminated with style, scholarship, and psychology; but its outstanding features are the lambent wit, the gay mockery, the genial irony with which he touches every subject he treats. But the wit is never malicious, the mockery never derisive, the irony never barbed. To quote from his own *GARDEN OF EPICURUS*: "Irony and Pity are both of good counsel; the first with her smiles makes life agreeable, the other sanctifies it to us with her tears. The Irony I invoke is no cruel deity. She mocks neither love nor beauty. She is gentle and kindly disposed. Her mirth disarms anger and it is she teaches us to laugh at rogues and fools whom but for her we might be so weak as to hate."

¶ Often he shows how divine humanity triumphs over mere asceticism, and with entire reverence; indeed, he might be described as an ascetic overflowing with humanity, just as he has been termed a "pagan, but a pagan constantly haunted by the pre-occupation of Christ." He is in turn—like his own Choulette in *THE RED LILY*—saintly and Rabelaisian, yet without incongruity.

THE WORKS OF ANATOLE FRANCE

At all times he is the unrelenting foe of superstition and hypocrisy. Of himself he once modestly said: "You will find in my writings perfect sincerity (lying demands a talent I do not possess), much indulgence, and some natural affection for the beautiful and good."

¶ The mere extent of an author's popularity is perhaps a poor argument, yet it is significant that two books by this author are in their HUNDRED AND TENTH THOUSAND, and numbers of them well into their SEVENTIETH THOUSAND, whilst the one which a Frenchman recently described as "Monsieur France's most arid book" is in its FIFTY-EIGHTH THOUSAND.

¶ Inasmuch as M. FRANCE'S ONLY contribution to an English periodical appeared in THE YELLOW BOOK, vol. v., April 1895, together with the first important English appreciation of his work from the pen of the Hon. Maurice Baring, it is peculiarly appropriate that the English edition of his works should be issued from the Bodley Head.

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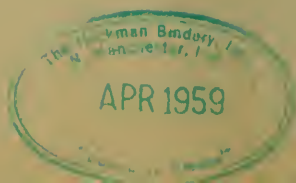
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